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The Portico of Brandon, from the Garden.

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VIRGINIA
ANNEX

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TO

THE HONOURABLE FRANCIS E. HUTCHINS,

THE FATHER OF ONE AUTHOR,
THE MORE THAN FATHER-IN-LAW OF THE OTHER,
AND THE EVER-STAUNCH FRIEND OF GADABOUT,
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

This volume was formerly published under the title, "Houseboating on a Colonial Waterway"; but its appropriateness for inclusion in the "See America First Series" to represent the State of Virginia is so obvious that the publishers have, in this new edition, changed the title to "Virginia: The Old Dominion," and reissued the book in a new dress, generally uniform with the other volumes in the series.

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Virginia
Beach
BACK
BAY

VIRGINIA:
The Old Dominion

CHAPTER I

ALL ABOUT GADABOUT

It was dark and still and four o'clock on a summer morning. The few cottages clustering about a landing upon a Virginia river were, for the most part, sleeping soundly, though here and there a flickering light told of some awakening home. Down close by the landing was one little house wide awake. Its windows were aglow; lights moved about; and busy figures passed from room to room and out upon the porch in front.

Suddenly, with a series of quick, muffled explosions, the whole cottage seemed carried from its foundations. It slipped sidewise, turned almost end for end, then drifted slowly away from its neighbours, out into the darkness and the river. Its occupants seemed unconscious of danger. There was one of

them standing on the porch quite unconcernedly turning a wheel, while two or three others were watching, with rather amused expressions, two little engines chugging away near the kitchen stove.

And thus it was that the houseboat Gadabout left her moorings in the outskirts of old Norfolk, and went spluttering down the Elizabeth to find Hampton Roads and to start upon her cruise up the historic James River.

But to tell the story we must begin before that summer morning. It was this way. We were three: the daughter-wife (who happened to see the magazine article that led to it all), her mother, and her husband. The head of the family, true to the spirit of the age, had achieved a nervous breakdown and was under instructions from his physician to betake himself upon a long, a very long, vacation.

It was while we were in perplexed consideration as to where to go and what to do, that the magazine article appeared — devoted to houseboating. It was a most fetching production with a picture that appealed to every overwrought nerve. There was a charming bit of water with trees hanging over; a sky all soft and blue (you knew it was soft and

blue just as you knew that the air was soft and cool; just as you knew that a drowsy peace and quiet was brooding over all); and there, in the midst, idly floated a houseboat with a woman idly swinging in a hammock and a man idly fishing from the back porch.

That article opened a new field for our consideration. Landlubbers of the landlubbers though we were, its water-gypsy charm yet sank deep. We thirsted for more. We haunted the libraries until we had exhausted the literature of houseboating.

And what a dangerously attractive literature we found! How the cares and responsibilities of life fell away when people went a-houseboating! What peace unutterable fell upon the worn and weary soul as it drifted lazily on, far from the noise and the toil and the reek of the world! All times were calm; all waters kind. The days rolled on in ever-changing scenes of beauty; the nights, star-gemmed and mystic, were filled with music and the witchery of the sea.

It made good reading. It made altogether too good reading. We did not see that then. We did not know that most of the literature of houseboating is the work of people with plenty of imagination and no houseboats.

We resolved to build a houseboat. There

was excitement in the mere decision; there was more when our friends came to hear of it. Their marked disapproval made our new departure seem almost indecorous. It was too late; the tide had us; and disapproval only gave zest to the project.

As a first step, we proceeded to rechristen ourselves from a nautical standpoint. The little mother was so hopelessly what the boatmen call a fair-weather sailor that her weakness named her, and she became Lady Fairweather. The daughter-wife, after immuring herself for half a day with nautical dictionaries and chocolate creams, could not tell whether she was Rudderina or Maratima; she finally concluded that she was Nautica. It required neither time nor confectionery to enable these two members of the family to rename the third. They viewed the strut of plain Mr. So-and-So at the prospect of commanding a vessel, and promptly dubbed him Commodore.

An earnest quest was next made for anybody and everybody who had ever used, seen, or heard of a houseboat; and the Commodore made journeys to various waters where specimens of this queer craft were to be found. All the time, three lead pencils were kept busy, and plans and specifications became as

autumn leaves. We soon learned that there was little room for the artistic. Once Nautica had a charming creation, all verandas and overhanging roofs and things; but an old waterman came along and talked about wind and waves, and most of the overhanging art on that little houseboat disappeared under the eraser.

"That's all good enough for one of those things you just tie to a bank and hang Chinese lanterns on," he said. "But it would never do for a boat that's going to get out in wide water and take what's coming to it."

When we concluded that we had the plans to our satisfaction (or rather that we never should have, which amounted to the same thing), we turned over to a builder the task of making them into something that would float and hold people and go. The resulting craft, after passing through a wrecking and some rebuilding, we called Gadabout. She was about fifty feet long and twelve feet wide over all, as the watermen say; and was propelled by twin screws, driven by two small gasoline engines. Though not a thing of beauty, yet, as she swung lazily at her moorings with her wide, low windows and the little hooded cockpit that we tried hard not

to call a porch, she looked cozy and comfortable. Her colouring was colonial yellow and white, with a contrast of dark olive on the side runways and the decks.

Inside, Gadabout was arranged as house-like and, we thought, as homelike as boating requirements would permit. There were two cabins, one at either end of the craft. Between these, and at one side of the passage-way connecting them, was what we always thought of as the kitchen, but always took care to speak of as the galley.

At first glance, each of the cabins would be taken as a general living-room. Each was that; but also a little of everything else. At customary intervals, one compartment or the other would become a dining-cabin. Again, innocent looking bits of wall would give way, and there would appear beds, presses, lavatories, and a lamentable lack of room.

Both cabins were finished in old oak, dark and dead; there is a superabundance of brightness on the water. The ceilings showed the uncovered, dark carlines or rafters. The walls had, along the top, a row of niches for books; and along the bottom, a deceptive sort of wainscoting, each panel of which was a locker door. Between book niches above and wainscoting below, the walls were paneled in

THE HOUSEBOAT GADABOUT.

green burlap with brown rope for molding. The furnishing was plain.

The kitchen or galley was rather small as kitchens go, and rather large as galleys go. It would not do to tell all the things that were in it; for anybody would see that they could not all be there. Perhaps it would be well to mention merely the gasoline stove, the refrigerator, the pump and sink, the wall-table, the cupboards for supplies, the closet for the man's serving coats and aprons, the racks of blue willow ware dishes, and the big sliding door.

One has to mention the big sliding door; for it made such a difference. It worked up and down like a window-sash, and always suggested the conundrum, When is a galley not a galley? For when it was down, it disclosed nothing and the galley was a galley; but when it was up, it disclosed a recess in which two little gasoline motors sat side by side, and the galley was an engine-room.

It was a very ingenious and inconvenient arrangement. Operating the stove and the engines at the same time was scarcely practicable; and we were often forced to the hard choice of lying still on a full stomach or travelling on an empty one.

There yet remains to be described the

crew's quarters. The crew consisted of two hands, both strong and sturdy, and both belonging to the same coloured man. Though our trusty tar, Henry, had doubtless never heard "The Yarn of the 'Nancy Bell'" and had never eaten a shipmate in his life, yet he had a whole crew within himself as truly as the "elderly naval man" who had eaten one. There was therefore no occasion for extensive quarters. Fortunately, an available space at the stern was ample for the crew's cabin and all appointments.

All these interior arrangements were without the makeshifts so often found in houseboats. There were no curtains for partition walls nor crude bunks for beds. People aboard a houseboat must at best be living in close quarters. But, upon even the moderate priced craft, much of the comfort, privacy, and refinement of home life may be enjoyed by heading off an outlay that tends toward gilt and grill work and turning it into substantial partitions, real beds, baths, and lavatories.

Gadabout was square at both ends; so that the uninitiated were not always sure which way she was going to go. Indeed, for a while, her closest associates were conservative in forecasting on that point. But that

IN THE FORWARD CABIN.

LOOKING AFT FROM THE FORWARD CABIN.

was for another reason. The boat was of extremely light draft. While such a feature enables the houseboater to navigate very shallow waters (where often he finds his most charming retreats), yet it also enables the houseboat, under certain conditions of wind and tide, to go sidewise with all the blundering facility of a crab.

At first, in making landings we were forced to leave it pretty much to Gadabout as to which side of the pier she was to come up on, and which end first, and with how much of a bump. But all such troubles soon disappeared; and, as there seemed no change in the craft herself, we were forced to believe that our own inexperience had had something to do with our difficulties.

To Gadabout and her crew, add anchors, chains and ropes, small boats, poles and sweeps, parallel rulers, dividers and charts, anchor-lights, lanterns and side-lights, compasses, barometers and megaphones, fenders, grapnels and boathooks — until the landlubberly owners are almost frightened back to solid land; and then all is ready for a houseboat cruise.

CHAPTER II

OUR FIRST RUN AND A COZY HARBOUR

DAYLIGHT came while Gadabout was lumbering down the Elizabeth, and in the glory of the early morning she followed its waters out into Hampton Roads, the yawning estuarial mouth of the James emptying into Chesapeake Bay.

She would probably have started in upon her cruise up the historic river without more ado if we had not bethought ourselves that she was carrying us into the undertaking breakfastless. The wheel was put over hard to port (we got that out of the books) and the craft was run in behind Craney Island and anchored.

While our breakfast was preparing, we all gathered in the forward cockpit to enjoy the scene and the life about us. The houseboat was lying in a quiet lagoon bordered on the mainland side by a bit of Virginia's great truck garden. Here and there glimpses of chimneys and roof lines told of truckers'

homes, while cultivated fields stretched far inland.

The height of the trucking season was past, yet crates and barrels of vegetables were being hauled to the water's edge for shipment. The negroes sang as they drove, but often punctuated the melody with strong language designed to encourage the mules. One wailing voice came to our ears with the set refrain, "O feed me, white folks! White folks, feed me!" The crates and barrels were loaded on lighters and floated out to little sailing boats that went tacking past our bows on their way to Norfolk.

It was a pretty scene, but there was one drawback to it all. Everything showed the season so far advanced, and served to remind us of the lateness of our start. We had intended to take our little voyage on the James in the springtime. It had been a good deal a matter of sentiment; but sentiment will have its way in houseboating. We had wished to begin in that gentle season when the history of the river itself began, and when the history of this country of ours began with it.

For, whatever may have gone before, the real story of the James and of America too commences with the bloom of the dogwood

some three hundred years ago, when from the wild waste of the Atlantic three puny, storm-worn vessels (scarcely more seaworthy than our tub of a houseboat) beat their way into the sheltering mouth of this unknown river.

That was in the days when the nations of Europe were greedily contending for what Columbus had found on the other side of the world. In that struggle England was slow to get a foothold. Neglect, difficulty, and misfortune made her colonies few and short-lived. By the opening of the seventeenth century Spain and France, or perhaps Spain alone, seemed destined to possess the entire new hemisphere. In all the extent of the Americas, England was not then in possession of so much as a log fort. Apparently the struggle was ended and England defeated. No one then could have imagined what we now behold — English-speaking people possessing most and dominating all of that new-found Western World.

This miracle was wrought by the coming of those three little old-time ships, the Sarah Constant, the Goodspeed, and the Discovery.

It was in the year 1607 that the quaint, high-sterned caravels, representing the forlorn hope of England, crossed the ocean to found a colony on Roanoke Island. Storm-tossed

and driven out of their reckoning, they turned for refuge one April day into a yawning break in the coast-line that we now call Chesapeake Bay. Following the sheltering, inviting waters inland, they took their way up a "Greate River," bringing to it practically the first touch of civilization and establishing upon its shore the first permanent English settlement in the New World — the birthplace of our country.

The civilizers began their work promptly. Even as they sailed up the river looking for a place to found their colony, they robbed the stream of its Indian name, Powhatan, that so befitted the bold, tawny flow, bestowing instead the name of the puerile King of England. That was the first step toward writing in English the story of the James River, the "Greate River," the "King's River."

It was later by three hundred years lacking one when our houseboat came along to gather up that story. But to our regret it was not springtime. The dogwood blossoms had come and gone when Gadabout lay behind Craney Island; and she would start upon her cruise up the James in the heart of the summertime.

In some way that only those who know the laze of houseboating can understand, the

hours slipped by in that tiny, tucked-away haven, and it was the middle of the afternoon when Gadabout slowly felt her way out from behind the island and started up the James in the wake of the Sarah Constant, the Goodspeed, and the Discovery. That historic wake we were to follow for the first thirty miles of our journey, when it would bring us to the spot on the bank of the river where those first colonists landed and built their little settlement which (still honouring an unworthy king) they called James Towne.

As Gadabout sturdily headed her stubby bow up the wide, majestic waterway, we looked about us. After all, what had three centuries done to this gateway of American civilization? Surely not very much. Keeping one's eyes in the right direction it was easy to blot out three hundred years, and to feel that we were looking upon about the same scene that those first colonists beheld — just the primeval waste of rolling waters, lonely marsh, and wooded shore.

But eyes are unruly things; and, to be sure, there were other directions in which to look. Glances northward took in a scene different enough from the one that met the eyes of those early voyagers.

Upon the low point of land along which

they at last found a channel into the James and which (in their relief) they named Point Comfort, now stood a huge modern hostelry.

To the left of this, the ancient shore-line was now broken by a dull, square structure that reared its ugly bulk against the sky — a strangely grim marker of the progress of three centuries. For this was the grain elevator at Newport News, spouting its endless stream to feed the Old World, and standing almost on the spot where those first settlers in the New World, sick and starving, once begged and then fought the Indians for corn. Lying in the offing were great ships from overseas that had come to this land of the starving colonists for grain.

Beyond all these could be seen something of the town of Newport News itself. Towers and spires and home smoke-wreaths we saw, where those beginners of our country saw only the spires of the lonely pines and the smoke from hostile fires.

As our houseboat skirted the southern shore of the James in the sunny afternoon, our engines chugging merrily, our flags flying, and our two trailing rowboats dancing on the boiling surge kicked up astern, we felt that our cruise was well begun. Not that we were misled for a moment by that boiling surge

astern into the belief that we were making much progress. We had early perceived that Gadabout made a great stir over small things, and that she went faster at the stern than anywhere else.

Yet all that was well enough. So long as the sun shines and the water lies good and flat, dawdling along in such a craft is an ideal way to travel. If the houseboat is built with the accent on the first syllable, as it ought to be, the homey feeling comes quickly to the family group aboard. Day after day brings new scenes and places, yet the family life goes on unbroken. It is as though Aladdin had rubbed the wonderful lamp, and the old home had magically drifted away and started out to see what the world was like.

Now, just ahead of us where the chart had a little asterisk, the river had a little lighthouse perched high over the water on its long spindling legs. Gadabout ran just inside the light and quite close to it. It is an old and a pretty custom by which a passing vessel "speaks" a lighthouse. In this instance perhaps we were a trifle tardy, for the kindly keeper greeted us first with three strokes of his deep-toned bell. Gadabout responded with three of her bravest blasts.

It was not long before the sun got low, and

with the late afternoon something of a wind whipped up from the bay, and the wide, low-shored river rolled dark and unfriendly. We found our thoughts outstripping Gadabout in the run toward a harbour for the night.

That word "harbour" comes to mean a good deal to the houseboater who attempts to make a cruiser of his unseaworthy, lubberly craft. A little experience on even inland waters in their less friendly moods develops in him a remarkable aptitude for finding holes in the bank to stick his boat in.

Sometimes the vessel is seaworthy enough to lie out and take whatever wind and waves may inflict; but that is usually where much of the charm and comfort of the houseboat has been sacrificed to make her so. Then too the houseboater is usually quite a landlubber after all; so that even if the boat is strong enough to meet an angry sea, the owner's stomach is not. And, over and above all this, is the fact that miserably pitching and rolling about in grim battle with the elements is not houseboating.

It is easy then to see that snug harbours count for much when cruising in the true spirit of houseboating, and in the charming, awkward tubs that make the best and the most lovable of houseboats.

So, as Gadabout was passing Barrel Point and the wind was freshening and the waves were slapping her square bow, we were thinking not unpleasantly of a small tributary stream that the chart indicated just ahead, and in which we should find quiet anchorage. There seemed something snug and cozy about the very name of the stream, Chuckatuck. In this case the pale-face has left undisturbed the red man's picturesque appellation; and we knew that we should like — Chuckatuck.

Just before we reached the creek, two rowboats put out from the river shore filled with boys and curiosity. A cheery salute was given us as the houseboat passed close by the skiffs, and we thought no more of them. But after a while footsteps were heard overhead and we found that we had a full cargo of boys. They had made their boats fast to Gadabout's stern as she passed, and were now grouped in some uncertainty on the upper deck. A nod from Nautica put them at ease, and in a moment they were scattered all over the outside of the boat, calling to one another, peering into windows, and asking no end of questions.

The boys proved helpful too. They were fisher-lads, well acquainted with those waters, and were better than the chart in guiding

Along the Shore of Chuckatuck Creek

us among the shoals and into the channel of the creek.

A low headland prevented our getting a good view up the stream until Gadabout swung into the middle of it. We seemed to be entering a little lake bordered by tree-covered hills. At the far end of the blue basin was a break and a gleam of lighter water to show that this was not really a lake but a stream. There it made the last of its many turnings and spread its waters in this beautiful harbour before losing them in the James.

On the hills to our right, houses showed among the trees, some with the ever-pleasing white-pillared porticoes; and on the hills to our left was a village that straggled down the slope to the wharf as if coming to greet the strangers. In this little harbour was quite a fleet, mostly fishing craft, and all bowing politely on the swell of the tide.

There was such diversity of opinion among our self-constituted pilots as to the best place for us to drop anchor, that the Commodore turned a deaf ear to them all and attempted to run alongside a schooner to make inquiries. She was a good sized craft, and it did not seem as if he could miss her. He claimed that he did not. He explained that when we got

up there, our ropes fell short and we drifted helplessly past because the blundering captain of the schooner had anchored her too far away from us.

Kindly overlooking this error of a fellow navigator, the Commodore patiently spent considerable of the beautiful summer evening in getting Gadabout turned around; and then again bore down upon the schooner. This time her being in the wrong place did not seem to matter; for we reached her all right, and there probably was no place along that side where we did not remove more or less paint. The captain of the schooner gave us the needed information about the harbour; our lines were cast off, and the houseboat was soon anchored in a snug berth for the night.

Then, sitting upon our canopied upper deck, enjoying the last of our city melons cooled with the last of our city ice, we looked out over what we supposed was but the first of many such beautiful creek-harbour scenes to be found along the river. We did not know that there was to be no other like Chuckatuck.

After a while, a small steamer came in from the James, a boat plying regularly between Norfolk and landings along this creek.

It was just the kind of steamer, any one

would say, to be running on the Chuckatuck — a fat, wheezy side-wheeler that came up to its landing near us with three hearty whistles and such a jovial puffing as seemed to say, "Now, I'm certainly mighty glad to get back again to you all." Just the sort of steamer that wouldn't mind a bit if the pretty girls were "a right smart time" kissing goodbye; or if the Colonel had to finish his best story; or if old Maria had to "study a spell" because she had "done forgot" what Miss Clarissa wanted the steward to bring from the city next day.

As the sun sank behind the hills (or rather some time after, for we never could be nautically prompt), our flags were run down and the anchor-light was hoisted on the forward flagstaff.

The summer night closed in softly; the blue waters grew dark, and caught from the sky the rich lights that the setting sun had left behind. We could see figures sitting upon the white porticoes looking out over the miniature harbour. Somewhere were the music of a merry-go-round and the calls and laughter of children. In from the wider waters came more boats, their white sails folding down as they neared their haven. All the beautiful mystery of the deepening twi-

light touched water and masts, and shadowed the circling shore.

Then came the long hours of darkness when, with all aboard asleep, Gadabout lay quietly at anchor, the riding-light upon her flagstaff gently swaying throughout the night. Silently, with none to heed and none to know, was enacted again in the gloom the play that is as old as the first ship upon tideway. With bow turned up-stream, Gadabout sank slowly lower and lower, as even little Chuckatuck heard the voice of the far-away ocean calling its waters home. Then, crossing slowly over her anchor and turning to head the other way, Gadabout rose once more higher and higher, as the night wore on and as the great recurring swell rolled landward again the waters of the sea.

CHAPTER III

LAND, HO! OUR COUNTRY'S BIRTHPLACE

WHEN we hoisted our anchor next day, it came up reluctantly; and we sailed away with faces often turned backward toward the little harbour of Chuckatuck, with its blue of wave and sky, its white of cloud and beach, its green of circling hills, and the picturesque life on its waters.

Out again in the James (still some four miles wide), we felt that Nature had almost overdone the matter of supplying us with a waterway for our voyage. We should willingly have dispensed with a mile or so on either side of our houseboat. There was a wind that kept steadily freshening, so that after rounding Day's Point we noticed that the river was getting rather rough; and we soon found that Gadabout was equally observing. She rolled and pitched; but with both engines and the tide to help her along she made good enough headway.

And in navigating the broad stream what

advantages we had over those early mariners upon the Sarah Constant, the Goodspeed, and the Discovery!

Their passage up this river was upon unknown waters through an unknown land. We knew just where we were, and where we were going. They even fancied that they might be upon an arm of the ocean that would lead through the new-found world and open a direct route to the South Sea and to the Indies. Our maps showed us that even this wide waterway was but a river; and that while it flowed some four hundred miles from its source beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains, yet we could ascend it only about one hundred miles, as we should then come upon a line of falls and rapids that would prevent farther navigation.

In the case of those early voyagers, savages lurked along the wooded shores and greater dangers lay in the unknown, treacherous currents and hidden bars of the stream itself. We should have to imagine all our savages; and there, on the table in Gadabout's little cockpit, close to the man (or, quite as likely, the woman) at the wheel, lay charts that told the hidden features of the river highway.

Quaint old-time Sarah and her sister ships

could not have sailed up this waterway very far before finding navigation difficult. Even small as they were, they must often have found scant water if the James of that time, like the James of to-day, had its top and bottom so close together every here and there. A majestic river several miles wide, often fifty to seventy-five feet deep, yet barred by such tangles of shoals as one would not expect to find in a respectable creek. And shoals too that the colour of the water hides from the keenest eyes.

To be sure, for us it was all plain sailing. The charts told where the shoals were and how to avoid them. Our chief danger lay in presuming too much upon our light draft and in venturing too far from the indicated channels. But how about those deeper-draft, chartless sailing craft? Well, they managed to get along anyway, and our houseboat must on after them.

One more straight reach of the river, one more great sweeping bend, and we should come upon the site of that old village of James Towne. Still the tawny Powhatan, like many another proud savage, showed small sign of succumbing to civilization. There seemed scarce any mark of human habitation. The life of the people, where

there were people, must have been back from the banks. The river itself was empty. Nowhere was there wreath of smoke or shimmer of sail. Just the wild beauty of the shores, the noble expanse of the stream, the cloudless blue of the summer sky, and Gadabout.

Yet, we were not seeing quite the James that those first English eyes beheld. For them the slopes and headlands were covered with far nobler forests and Nature wore her May-time gown. Life and colour were everywhere. In the clear atmosphere of the Virginia spring, the woodland was a wealth of living green radiantly starred with flowers. What a Canaan those weary, storm-tossed colonists must have thought it all!

We can well imagine the little family groups gathered on the decks, eagerly planning for their new life. We can see the brightening in the tired eyes of women and of children as the ships tack near to the flowery shore; as schools of fish break the river into patches of flashing silver; as strange, brilliant birds go flaming in the sunlight; as beauty is added to beauty in this wondrous new home-land.

No! We blunder in our history. There were no women and children on the Sarah

"JUST THE WILD BEAUTY OF THE SHORES, THE NOBLE EXPANSE OF THE STREAM, . . . AND GADABOUT."

Constant, nor on the Goodspeed, nor on the Discovery. The story of these ships is not like that later one of the Mayflower. The colour dies out of the picture; and there remains only the worn, motley band of men — men who have taken possession of the country by the sign of the cross, fit omen of the fate awaiting them.

At last our houseboat came about the bend in the river and before us along the northern shore lay Jamestown Island, the site of old James Towne. We could make out little yet but the low wooded shore and the wide opening that we knew was the mouth of Back River, the waterway that cuts off from the mainland that storied piece of soil. Now Gadabout's steering-wheel was counting spokes to starboard; she headed diagonally up the river toward the northern shore, and we were soon nearing the historic island.

So, here was where those three little ships that we had been following at the respectful distance of three centuries, terminated their voyage; here was where that handful of colonists founded the first permanent English settlement in the New World; here was the cradle of our country.

However, the place in those old days was not exactly an island, although even the early

colonists often called it so. There was a low isthmus (that has since been washed away) connecting with the mainland; so that the site of the settlement was in reality a peninsula. It was a low and marshy peninsula, an unhealthful place for the site of a colony. The settlers had a hard time from the beginning. They would have had a harder time but for the presence of a remarkable man among them. He was one of the best of men, or he was one of the worst — dependent upon which history you happen to pick up. At all events, he was the man for the hour. But for him the colony would have perished at the outset. This man of course was the schoolboy's hero, Captain John Smith.

The chief hardships of the colonists at first were scarcity of food and frequent Indian attacks. To these were soon added a malarial epidemic caused by the unhealthful surroundings. As if there were yet not suffering enough, the "Supplies" (the ships that came over with reinforcements and food) brought bubonic plague and cholera from English ports. Often, if they had touched at the West Indies, they brought yellow fever too. The sufferings in that little pioneer settlement of our country have scarcely been equalled in modern colonization.

Time went on; and the population waxed and waned as reinforcements built it up and as the terrible mortality cut it down again. All the while there seemed no outcome to the struggle. James Towne had in it not even the promise of a successful colony. The settlers did not find the gold and precious stones that were expected, nor did they find or produce in quantities any valuable commodities. They were not even self-supporting. The colony held on because constantly fed with men and provisions by the "Supplies." There was dissatisfaction in London; in James Towne misery and often despair. The climax of disappointment and suffering was reached in the spring of 1610, ever since known as the "Starving Time." In that season of horror, the settlement almost passed out of existence.

After that matters improved, and chiefly because of a single development: James Towne learned to grow tobacco; Europe learned to use it. From that time the place took on new life and made great strides toward becoming self-supporting. More and better settlers arrived, and the colony even put out offshoots, so that soon there were several settlements up and down the river and upon other rivers. And of all, James Towne

was the seat of government, the proud little capital of the Colony of Virginia.

But trouble was still in store for this pioneer village, and this time final disaster. The very cause of prosperity became the chief cause of downfall. Tobacco and towns could not long flourish together. The famous weed rapidly exhausted the soil, and there was constant need for new lands to clear and cultivate. The leading Virginians turned their backs upon James Towne and upon the other struggling settlements too, and established vast individual estates along the river to which they drew the body of the people.

To be sure there still had to be some place as the seat of government; and in that capacity the village hung on a good while longer, though with few inhabitants aside from colonial officials and some tavern-keepers. It was not to be allowed to keep even these. Despite every effort to force the growth of the town, it dwindled; and in 1699 it received its deathblow upon the removal of the seat of government to Williamsburg.

The rest is a matter of a few words. The pioneer village was gradually abandoned and fell to ruins. As though natural decay could not tear down and bury fast enough, the greedy river came to its aid. Besides eating

away the ancient isthmus, the James attacked the upper end of the island, devouring part of the site of the old-time settlement. Between decay and the river, James Towne, the birthplace of our country, vanished from the face of the earth.

CHAPTER IV

A RUN AROUND JAMESTOWN ISLAND

Now Gadabout, her engines slowed down, drifted almost unguided among the shallows beside Jamestown Island; for our eyes were only for that close-lying shore and our thoughts for what it had to tell us.

The end of the island toward us was well wooded though fringed with marsh. All of it that could be seen was just as we would have it — without a mark of civilization; wild, lonely, and still. In keeping with the whole sad story seemed the gloom of the forest, the loneness of the marsh, and the surge of the waves upon the desolate shore.

When we took Gadabout in hand again, we did not keep along the front of the island to where the colonists "tied their ships to the trees" and made their landing; but, instead, we turned from the James and ran up Back River in behind the island. Our plan was to sail up this stream to a point where the chart showed a roadway and a bridge, and to tie up the houseboat there. That would be

Jamestown Island from the River

convenient for us and for Gadabout too. The roadway we should use in crossing the island to visit the chief points of interest, which were on the James River side; and Gadabout would have a more protected harbour than could be found for her in front.

Though nothing serious came of the matter, we were not taking a good time to run up the little stream behind Jamestown Island, as the tide had long since turned and we were going in on a falling tide. We did not relish the idea of running aground perhaps, and of having the ebbing waters leave our craft to settle and wreck herself upon some hidden obstruction. So Gadabout took plenty of time to run up Back River, feeling her way cautiously with a sounding-pole, like some fat old lady with a walking-stick.

There must once have been a better channel here; for in the early days of the colony, vessels did not always land at the front of the island, but sometimes ran up Back River as our houseboat was now doing. Indeed, we were expecting to come soon to the wooded rise of land once called "Pyping Point," where of old a boat in passing would sound "a musical note" to apprise the townspeople of its coming. And but a little way beyond that again, near the present-day bridge where

we expected to stop, we should find the site of the ancient landing-place which was called "Friggett Landing."

As Gadabout slowly moved along, she occasionally got out of the channel into the shallows, in spite of chart and sounding-pole; and more than once she struck bottom. But she always discovered the channel and scrabbled back into it before the soft mud, even aided by the falling tide, could get a good hold of her. No, not quite always was she so fortunate. For at last, in following a turn of the channel toward the island, she went too far; her stern swung about and grounded in the shallows; her propeller clogged in the mud, and she came to a stop.

We accepted that stop as final. No attempt was made to put out a kedge anchor and to "haul off" with the windlass. We simply walked around the houseboat on the guard taking soundings. Finding that the boat was settling upon fairly level bottom, and feeling that the farther she went the worse she would fare, we took our chances as to what might be under her and made no further effort.

Nautica had a good motto, which was, "When in trouble, eat." So the next thing was dinner. Then Nautica and the Commo-

IN BACK RIVER.

THE BEACH AT JAMESTOWN ISLAND.

dore embarked in a shore-boat on a voyage of discovery, a search for the lost channel. By this time the water was but a few inches deep around the houseboat. Evidently, the explorers would not dare to go far or to be gone long for fear the ebbing tide would prevent their getting back. But it was not necessary to go far to find the channel. Indeed it was found unpleasantly near. The houseboat had stranded on a safe, level shoal, but almost on the edge of a steep declivity leading down into twelve feet of water. We felt that if Gadabout had to go aground, she at least might have done it a little farther away from precipitous channel banks.

Sitting on the upper deck, we talked and read, and watched the water slowly drawing away from our houseboat until all about us was bare ground; to starboard a narrow strip of it between us and the channel, and to port a wide stretch of it between us and the shore.

We thought most and talked most of the historic island on the edge of which we had become squatters. It was a small stage for the world-shaping drama that had been enacted upon it.

Toward evening the tide turned again and the truant waters came back, lapping once more the sides of our boat. The Commodore

had to see that anchors were run ahead and astern, and all made snug for the night. Then, in the enjoyment of one of the most charming features of houseboating, an evening meal served on the upper deck, we watched the sun dip down behind the island and the twilight shadows gather in.

Still about us was no sight or sound of human life. The shadows deepened and darkness came. Then gradually a faint silvery light stole over water and marsh and wooded shore; and the stillness was broken by a burst of faint, high, tremulous tones, as though a host of unseen hands swept tiny invisible mandolins. The silvery light came from the rising moon; the rest was just mosquitoes.

Next day, as soon as Gadabout was afloat, she started up stream again to find the bridge and a landing-place. There was no trouble about the channel this time. The waterway, as if taking pity upon indifferent navigators, suddenly contracted to a very narrow stream, deep almost from bank to bank, so that we could not well have got out of the channel if we had tried. In such a place, we were stout-hearted mariners and the good houseboat stemmed the waters gallantly. Already we were thinking of how we too, in passing "Pyping Point," should sound a blast most

lustily. Perhaps it would not be exactly a "musical note" such as the townspeople were used to; but being two or three centuries dead, they probably would not notice the difference. However, we did not subject them to the experiment. Instead, we suddenly reversed our engine; Gadabout tried to stop in time; the ladies tried to look pleasant; the Commodore tried to shun over-expressive speech. There, just ahead, was a row of close-set pilings, blocking the stream from shore to shore.

There was nothing to do but to turn back, run around the island, and attempt to get in behind it at the other end. We probably should have tried the upper entrance in the first place had it not been that our chart showed by dotted lines some sort of obstruction there, while it did not at all indicate the barrier we had just encountered. Fortunately, as the tide was now rising and as we had got some knowledge of the channel, Gadabout made good progress in returning down the stream, and was soon out in the wide James again, sailing along the front of the island.

As we proceeded, the marshes gave way to a bank of good height edged with a gravel beach. Buildings were now in sight, and

horses and cattle grazing. We passed a pier with a warehouse on it, bearing a sign which read, "Jamestown Island, Site of the First Permanent English Settlement in America, 1607."

Now, a glimpse could be had of a relic of old James Towne, the ruined church tower, deep-set among the trees. Could our eyes have pierced the water under us, we might have seen more of the ruins of the ancient village. For Gadabout was holding in quite close to shore where no vessel could have gone in James Towne days, as the place was then solid land and a part of the settlement. Now, that part lay buried at the bottom of the river, and our boat was passing over it.

Coasting around the end of the island, we came upon a tree standing out in the water a hundred yards from shore. It was the famous "Lone Cypress," once growing on the island, now spreading its green branches in the midst of a watery waste — silently attesting the sacrifice of historic soil to the greedy river. A little way beyond the tree was what we were seeking, the upper entrance into the waterway behind the island.

In the days of the old settlement, there was no such entrance at this end; for here the narrow isthmus extended across, connect-

WHARF SIGN AT JAMESTOWN ISLAND.

THE "LONE CYPRESS."

ing with the mainland. But the same resistless wash of waves that had carried part of James Towne into the bed of the river, had broken down and submerged the isthmus too; and our chart showed that there was water enough for our houseboat to sail over where the colonists used to walk dry-shod.

As to the obstruction we had seen indicated on the chart, that proved to be the ruins of an old bridge extending out from the mainland along the submerged isthmus. But the island end of it had been carried away, and we readily passed through the opening left and got again into Back River behind the island. Following this for a few hundred yards, we found ourselves at last beside the bridge we long had sought. Standing on the upper deck, we could look down stream to the place where our houseboat had been stopped by the row of pilings. We had practically circumnavigated the island.

While making Gadabout fast to some convenient pilings, we heard gay voices and the rumble of wheels on the bridge.

"Look! Look!" cried one of a carriage-full of hatless girls in white muslins. "There's a houseboat. How in the world did it get in here?"

And we rather wondered ourselves.

CHAPTER V

FANCIES AFLOAT AND RUINS ASHORE

It was midday when we tied Gadabout to the pilings beside the bridge, and the weather was hot and sultry. So, we deferred until evening the long walk across the island. But already, sitting under our own awning, we were in the thick of historic association.

Where our houseboat lay, the early colonists used to find haven for their vessels, "lashed to one another and moor'd a shore secure from all Wind and Weather Whatsoever." As they found Back River at this point so we found it, a stream without banks; instead, on either hand stretched lonely marshes, jungles of reeds and rushes, now as then more than man high.

But our thoughts, busy with scenes two or three centuries gone, kept stumbling over two features of the landscape that were out of keeping with those old times. Back of us, where an isthmus should be stretching from island to mainland, was the open water

gateway through which we had come; and in front of us, where there should be nothing but river and marsh, that modern bridge reached from shore to shore.

Our quickened fancy made short work of such anachronisms. We promptly raised the submerged isthmus, tying the island to the mainland once more. Then we attacked the bridge; and, as the pilings to which our boat was fastened did not have any connection with that structure, we felt no misgivings as the troublesome modernism faded away.

The bridge disposed of, we bethought us that the road with which it had connected was also a latter-day feature. To be sure, our maps showed us that in colonial times too a road had crossed the island, and along much the same lines; but it had come out a little farther down Back River, at the point already referred to as "Friggett Landing."

To put the roadway right, then, we had first to locate the site of the old landing. And in this important matter what painstaking archeologists we were! Not by guesswork, but by a long string, did we locate "Friggett Landing." After reading all that our authorities had to say on the subject (and understanding part of it), we sent our man down stream in a rowboat, confident that he

would find the landing at the end of the measured string. When the string ran out, the rowboat was opposite a point on the marshy edge of the island about one hundred feet below the present-day road.

The correctness of our work was at once evident. All the indications pointed to that; for the place showed not the slightest sign of ever having been used as a landing-place — which is just what you would expect after the lapse of two or three centuries.

After that, it was but the work of a moment to crook the end of the modern road, where it approached the river through a bit of elevated woodland (the only piece of solid land anywhere near us), and so make it come out, like the road of old, at the "landing."

Now, our man held aloft a stick with the houseboat's burgee on it, and a photograph was taken that we might not forget where our diverted road came out and where to go to meet the "friggetts" that might be coming in almost any time.

Our trifling bits of restoration made all satisfactory: an isthmus more, a bridge less, a crook in the end of a road — and the scene went back, as our thoughts went back, to those old James Towne days. To be sure, the village itself was still clear across the island on

the "Maine River" side, and we could not catch a glimpse of the colonists in their little streets nor even of the English colours flying over the fort.

However, there was enough taking place on our own side of the island. We had no sooner got the isthmus up out of the water than figures began to move across it. But such figures! Was there a mistake somewhere? These were not Englishmen, and they were not Indians. Behold, crossing our isthmus, Dutchmen, Italians, and Poles! Suddenly, from the midst of the group, came a glint and a flash of blue. Then we understood. These were the "skilful workmen from foreign parts" early sent over to the colony to make glass beads, preferably blue ones, for barter with the Indians.

Now, there were only two people on our isthmus — an Indian and a red-headed man. The Indian was tall and "a most strong stout Salvage"; the red-headed man was short but a most strong, stout Englishman. The Indian was Wowinchopunk, chief of the Paspaheghs; the red-headed man was Captain John Smith. A desperate hand-to-hand struggle ensued. We remembered that fight in the school-books, but we had never expected to really see it. Our sympathies were

of course largely with the Captain, but more with the isthmus. We had raised it out of the water for temporary purposes only, and with no idea of its being subjected to a strain like this. It was a relief when the two fighters rolled off into the water. By the time they had struggled out again, the white man was victor. As dripping captor and captive set off toward James Towne, we saw Fame stick another laurel leaf in the wet, red hair in commemoration of the single combat in which Captain John Smith defeated the "strong, stout Salvage," Wowinchopunk, on the James Towne isthmus.

For a while after that, nothing much happened over our way. Indians occasionally passed and repassed; now striding openly across to the island on friendly visit, now skulking over to pick off unwary settlers. Once we caught, in a hazy way, the most touching picture associated with the old isthmus — the little savage maiden, Pocahontas, with heart divided between her own people and the pale-faces, crossing over at the head of her train of Indians bearing venison and corn for the half-famished settlers. Pathetic little figure! Often all that seemed to stand between the colonists and destruction.

It was the sound of voices that now made

us turn and look the other way. Many people were following the crook in our road, passing through the bit of woodland and coming out at "Friggett Landing." We had heard no "musical note," but evidently the townspeople had; and there, surely enough, was a queer little vessel stopping right where we had marked the spot. It was a pleasure to see that she so readily took our measurements for it. But how she got there perplexed us not a little, as we remembered the row of pilings across the stream that had stopped the houseboat, and which, even in our ardour to restore the colonial setting, we had not once thought to remove.

Back and forth across our isthmus played the old-time life of the colony. Rather sombre figures for a while, and all afoot. Then colour came, and colour on horseback too. They were seeing more prosperous times in the little village across the island. Prancing by went the "qualitye" in flaming silks, and high dignitaries in glittering gold lace. There was even a coach or two. That one attended by soldiers in queer "coats of mail" must belong to Sir William Berkeley, governor of the colony. However, we watched and waited long before anything of importance happened — probably several years.

But time does not count for much in house-boating.

At last, some soldiers marched across the island from the James Towne side to ours, and built a fort near the isthmus. Some more soldiers appeared on the mainland and began to build a fort on their side, near the isthmus. Then we knew that James Towne was seeing its most stirring days. Stubborn old Governor Berkeley and hot-headed young Nathaniel Bacon had fallen out over the Indian question. The people were divided; and here were the preparations for the trial of arms. While the Bacon fort, the one on the mainland, was yet incomplete, we beheld a strange line of white objects fluttering from the top of it. With the aid of field-glasses and some historical works, we at last made out that it was a row of women in white aprons. As our eyes became accustomed to the trying perspective of over two hundred years, we were able to recognize the charming wives of some of the most prominent men in the other fort. The ungallant Bacon had sent out and captured these excellent ladies, and now placed them in plain sight of their husbands, thus preventing the other fort from opening fire upon him until he had his fortification completed.

After the ladies had been helped down from the rough earthworks and had spoken their minds and taken off their white aprons and gone home, the battle began. Soldiers from the island fort made a sally across our isthmus, were repulsed, and later abandoned their works and fled pell-mell toward James Towne.

At the height of our interest, the flow of life across the historic isthmus lost colour, then died away. No more painted savages; no more soldiers; no more gay groups of mounted men and women in bright London dress; no more worshipful personages in rich velvet and gold lace. Instead, a slow sombre train crossing heavily over and disappearing along the forest road on the mainland leading to Williamsburg. Here, colonial records going by, telling that the brave little capital is a capital no more; there, a quaint church service, bespeaking abandoned holy walls and sacred doors flapping in the idle wind; and all along, those shapeless loads, telling of forsaken firesides, empty streets, a village deserted. After that, came only an occasional ox-cart, a load of hay, or (from the other direction) a carryall filled with strangers curious to visit the site of a little village that was once called James Towne.

Sadly we let our isthmus sink back beneath the waters; we straightened the old roadway, and rebuilt the bridge. Then we went ashore to visit the island, knowing that we should find only a few ruins and one of the best truck farms on the river.

Landing from our shore-boat near the end of the bridge at a little cove that made in through a greenery of fox grape and woodbine, we reached the road and started off through the woodland. It was a pleasant walk among the fragrant pine trees and in the soft light and the lengthening shadows of the waning summer day. Abruptly the grove ended, and thereafter the road led across a succession of marshy hollows and cleared ridges on its way to the other side of the island. About midway in its course it divided; one branch passing into a large enclosure, the other making a detour around it.

The enclosed land, twenty-three acres at the southwest corner of the island, belongs to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. It was given to that society by the present owner of the island, Mrs. Edward E. Barney.

Passing within the enclosure and following the caretaker, we approached with interest,

THE BRIDGE ACROSS BACK RIVER.

THE ROAD ACROSS THE ISLAND.

and something of reverence too, a grove near the river bank. It was a grove in whose shadowy depths is all of James Towne that remains above ground — a ruined church tower and some crumbling tombs. As we walked along the curving road, we caught glimpses now and then of the venerable tower; and gradually it emerged as out of the shadows of the past, and we stood facing it. Silently we gazed at the ancient pile, the most impressive ruin of English colonization. A hollow shaft of brick, with two high arched openings, a crumbling top, and a hold on the heart of every American.

How fitting that the four little broken walls alone remaining of all that the colonists built, should be not the walls of house or tavern or fort, but of the tower of the village church! Almost with the solemn significance of a tomb above the ashes of the dead, stands the sacred pile over the buried remains of old James Towne.

The ruin is about thirty-six feet high, though doubtless originally several feet higher. Near the top are loopholes that perhaps suggest the reason why the tower is of such massive build; in those days the red man influenced even church architecture.

Excavations to the east of the tower have

disclosed the foundation walls of the remainder of the church, and have helped to fix the date of erection as about 1639. Within these foundations, the ruins of a yet older building have been unearthed. They are doubtless the remains of a wooden church with brick foundations that was built about 1617. So, in the contemplation of these little ruins within ruins, the mind is carried back to the very beginnings of our country, to within ten years perhaps of the day when those first settlers landed.

What this old wooden church looked like probably nobody can tell; but much has been determined as to the general appearance of the brick church, that to which the venerable tower belonged.

The visitor will not be far wrong if, as he stands in the presence of these ruins, he sees in fancy a picture like this: the old tower with several feet of lost height regained, and with a roof sloping up from each of the four sides to a peak in the middle surmounted by a cross; behind the tower, those crumbling church foundations built up into strong walls, bearing a high-pitched roof; each side of the church with four flying buttresses and three lancet windows; the entrance, a pair of arched doorways, one in the front and one

in the back of the tower; above the doorway in the front, a large arched window; and, yet higher, the six ominous loopholes; all the walls of the structure composed of brick in mingled red and black, and the roofs of slate.

Now, if the visitor will enter the quaint old church that his fancy has thus restored — moving softly, for truly he is on holy ground and every step is over unknown dead — he may see in vague vision a very little of the ancient interior: the nave lighted by diamond-paned windows, not stained; the aisles between the rows of pews paved with brick; the chancel paved with tile; a gallery at the end next the tower; and, over all, the heavy timbers of the high-pitched roof. Perhaps beyond this fancy can not safely go.

Pilgrims to this broken shrine will be of two opinions as to a work of preservation that the Society owning this part of the island has entered into. About and within the church ruins, we saw evidences of building in progress, and learned that preparation was being made for a memorial structure or chapel, to be erected not on but over the old church foundation walls, to preserve them from the elements. It was to be a gift to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities from the National Society

of the Colonial Dames of America. Within the building, the ancient church foundations were to be left visible. Though the broken tower was to be untouched, yet this building was to be placed practically against it — to be, in fact, a restoration of the main body of the church.

From what we learned then and later, it was evident that the work was undertaken after the most careful study and in the most painstaking spirit. The structure has since been completed, and is doubtless as desirable a one as could be erected for the preservation of the church foundations. Still, there will be the difference of opinion as to the wisdom of placing a building of any kind close to the old tower. And this, even though the hard alternative should be to preserve the foundations with a cement covering merely, and to place some inconspicuous protection over the chancel.

To the unimaginative visitor, the plan that has been adopted will appeal. To him the ancient broken tower, standing alone, would have little charm in comparison with this faithful restoration of the old church, that enables him to see what he never could have seen but for its being shown to him in brick and mortar. But to the pilgrim of the other

THE RUINED TOWER OF THE OLD VILLAGE CHURCH.

sort — day-dreamer, if you will — there must come a sense not of gain but of loss. He will feel that, for a questionable combination of a restoration with a ruin, there has been sacrificed the most impressive spectacle on the island — the ancient church tower of vanished James Towne, standing in the shadow of the little grove by the river, broken, desolate, alone.

As we stood amidst ruins and building stuff, we tried to bear in mind that, of the two pilgrims, the unimaginative one is much the bigger; but we were so hopelessly a part of the other fellow.

CHAPTER VI

IN THE OLD CHURCHYARD

For two or three days after our visit to the church ruins, rain kept us prisoners within the houseboat. Such times are good tests to determine how much one possesses of the houseboating spirit. All the charms usually associated with such a life are blotted out by the lowering clouds, washed away by the falling water. And how the houseboat shrinks when it gets so wet! With decks unavailable, what a little thing the floating home suddenly becomes! Then there is the ceaseless patter overhead, and so close overhead that one almost feels like raising an umbrella.

But to the true houseboater there is a charm in it all. With water above, below, and all around, the little craft is yet tight and snug. There is plenty of food for the mind on the book-shelves above and plenty for the body in the lockers below. Lady Fairweather found a diversion of her own. She sat for a good part of one wet afternoon, with a

short pole thrust out of a window, a baited hook in the water, and an expectant look on her face. But we had an omelet for supper.

On the first bright morning we made preparations to visit the island again. As we were about to start, the sailor rushed into the forward cabin with story enough in his eyes, but only one word on his lips — "Fire!"

Then there was commotion. Nautica ran into the galley and Lady Fairweather ran for the Commodore, who was out on deck. He reached the galley to find one end of it in flames and himself half buried under a shower of boxes, cans, paper bags, and packages of breakfast food. Nautica, suddenly remembering one of the best things for extinguishing burning gasoline, was making everything fly as she frantically sought to reach a stowed-away bag of flour. The bag and the Commodore appeared about the same time, and together they made toward the gasoline stove from which the blaze was flaming across the galley. In an instant all of the flour was cast into the flames. It proved wholly insufficient, though warranted on the bag to go farther than any other brand.

Already the blaze was about the gasoline font. All knew that there was over a barrelful of the inflammable liquid in the tank on

the upper deck. Calling to the sailor to get the shore-boat ready, the Commodore scooped up the fallen flour and cast it again on the fire. Distracted Lady Fairweather suddenly rushed to her cabin and back again, and she too wildly cast a shower of something white into the blaze. Then she stood pale and speechless, all unconscious of the dainty, empty pink box clasped in both hands, and of her own heroism in sacrificing her complexion to save the houseboat. As it turned out, we had no need to row ashore. With little or nothing to account for it, except the perversity of gasoline, or perhaps the contents of the little pink box, the flames with a final flare went out.

Then we took account of the situation. Flour was everywhere. Nautica had eyebrows and hair singed, though she found that out only when she got the flour off. It was hard to tell what was the matter with the Commodore, or to take his troubles seriously. He had slightly scorched hands of course. But then one forgot them in looking at his expressive face made out of flour and soot, and in watching him spill breakfast food and tapioca when he walked.

We never knew how the fire came to start, any more than how it came to go out. When

fairly presentable again, we went up on the upper deck to find a cool place under the awning.

Evidently, we were adapting ourselves promptly to the ways of the country. Having fires seems to have been one of the chief diversions in old James Towne, and we had no sooner got to the island than we fell in with the custom. It was not a good custom. Even with the fire out we were in trouble; for Gadabout hadn't a piece of bread to her name, and we had thrown on the fire the last bit of flour aboard. We were falling in with more than one of the ways of the colonists — it was fire and famine too.

The Commodore suggested that we send a message to the owner of the island praying that a "Supply" be despatched to the starving new colonists. But Nautica held that such an appeal should be made in person; that the Commodore, like a true Captain John Smith, should start out himself to get food for his famishing little colony.

Thus put upon his mettle, the Commodore, trailed by the sailor with his basket, soon set off along the island road. Upon reaching the neighbourhood of the church ruins he met an old negro.

"Mornin', suh." And the shapeless hat

came off in a way that told that this was a survival of the old school.

"Good morning, uncle. Can you tell me which way to go to find the big house?"

"Yas, suh. I don' b'long heah myse'f, suh; but you see dat brick house down de road yondah, what's done been burn down? Well, dat was de big house, yas, suh. But it ain' no good to stop dere now, no, suh. You go right on by, and de big house now is de firs' little house you comes to."

According to these directions, the way was now along a road leading down the island. It ran not far from the river bank and through grounds having a border of trees skirting the water's edge. At last the "little big" house was reached. All the members of the family were away for the summer except one daughter who, with a friend from Richmond for company, was in charge of the servants and managing the island.

The Commodore introduced himself and his sad story of fire and famine. He explained that it would be two or three days before supplies could be got from Norfolk, and darkly hinted at a new chapter of suffering that might be added to the woeful history of the island unless something were done at once. The gloomy picture did not seem to impress

the young woman very painfully, for her reply was a laughing one; but a sack of flour went into the basket and a big loaf of bread besides. Upon its coming out in the conversation that we wished to remain at our anchorage for some time and should like to know of any limitations placed upon visitors, the freedom of the island was most kindly extended to us. The Commodore proudly returned with his supplies to the houseboat.

"Saved by the Daughter of the Island!" exclaimed Lady Fairweather. And by that name we came to speak of our benefactress.

After we had broken bread, borrowed bread and good too, another and more successful attempt was made to go on the island. Our object was to visit the old graveyard. Crossing again to the grove on the James River side, we entered in among the shadows that enwrap the ruined church and the crumbling tombs of the village dead. The graveyard, or what remains of it, is coextensive with the grove. When most of the deserted church crumbled and fell a hundred years ago, some of the bricks were used to build a wall around the old burying-ground. Parts of it are standing yet in picturesque, moss-covered ruins.

This time we found workmen engaged on

the foundations for the memorial building. So we were prevented from seeing satisfactorily some of the tombs, as they were boxed over to protect them while this work was in progress. However, the caretaker did all that he could for us.

Pitifully few are the stones remaining to mark the graves of that vanguard of English colonization. For most who lie here, the last record has crumbled away. Proud knight, proud lady, gentlemen, gentlewomen, and unknown humble folk, in common brotherhood at last, "dust to dust" and unmarked level ground above them.

One of the most notable of the remaining tombs is that of Lady Frances Berkeley, who rests beneath the shadow of the great hackberry tree that is said to have been brought over, a slender sapling, from England. But a few parts of words remain on the broken stone, and the date is gone. Though after the death of her husband, Sir William Berkeley, this lady became Mrs. Philip Ludwell, yet she clung to the greater name and insisted that her long sleep should be under its carven pomp.

Peeping into a shed that temporarily covered the old chancel floor, we caught a glimpse of the mysterious tomb of the island.

A Corner in the Old Graveyard

It is an ironstone tablet, once doubtless inlaid with brass, as the channellings for the metal are yet clearly defined. They show a draped figure and some smaller designs that have been taken as indications of knighthood, and have led to the conjecture that this is the tomb of Sir George Yeardley, governor of the Colony of Virginia, who died here in 1627. It is said to be the only tomb of the kind in America. Evidently, the stone has become somewhat displaced; for instead of being orientated as it must once have been, it now lies almost north and south.

We were not able to see the grave of William Sherwood, that humble but hopeful wrong-doer who lies under the chiselled words, "A Great sinner Waiting for a joyfull Resurrection."

The old graveyard, like the hoary tower, awes the mind and touches the heart. And this partly because of its pitiful littleness. A handful of cracked and broken stones to tell of all that terrible harvest that Death reaped in the ruined village! But perhaps they tell it all as hosts of tombs could not do. One reads between the stones, then far out beyond them where mouldering bones are feeding the smiling fields; and there is borne in upon him the thought that our country had life through

so much of death that this whole island is a graveyard.

After leaving the old tombs, we crossed a roadway and entered a ruined fort. In those few steps we made a long plunge down the years of history, and passed far away from old James Towne. None of the colonists ever saw those walls of earth. They are the remains of a Confederate fort. But, modern as they are, they have done what they could to put themselves in harmony with the ancientness all about. The slopes are grass-grown and even tree-grown. Within the walls is the caretaker's cottage in the midst of such a wealth of trees, flowering shrubs, and vines as makes a greenwood retreat. The grass-grown embrasures and the drooping branches over them form frames for river views that seem set there in place of the rusty cannon pieces.

It was toward evening when we started back across the island, houseboatward. We sauntered slowly at first, turning for a backward glance at the old church tower and pausing again to look out over the water at the island's outer sentinel, the "Lone Cypress." We paused yet another time down where the marsh reeds lined the way. Grasping handfuls of the coarse grass, the Commo-

dore started to illustrate how the colonists bound thatch, doubtless from that very marsh, to make roofs for their flimsy cabins. But the marsh furnished something besides grasses; and before the Commodore's explanation had gone far, his auditors had gone farther. He valiantly slew the snake, the whole six inches of it, and hastening forward found those more progressive houseboaters safely ensconced in the shore-boat.

As the little skiff moved out upon the river, a carriage rattled across the bridge. Sightseers who had driven over from Williamsburg were returning. However satisfied they may have felt with their short visit, we could only pity them. Yet such a visit, of a few hours at most, is all that is possible here except for one who brings his home with him, for there is no public house on the island. Stepping aboard Gadabout, we congratulated ourselves that she enabled us to live indefinitely right in the suburbs of old James Towne.

However, as days went on, Lady Fairweather became somewhat daunted by the dire predictions of chills and fever as a result of our long lying in the marshes; and one day she deserted the ship and sailed away on a bigger one. We thought she was to be gone only a little while, but she proved a real

deserter and Gadabout saw no more of her to the end of the cruise.

But chills and fever never came to Gadabout's household, though the dog-day sun beat upon the waste of reeds and rushes about us and though striped-legged mosquitoes were our nearest and most attentive neighbours. Fortunately, the mosquitoes did not feel that hospitality required them to call upon the strangers or to show them any attention except in the evening. Even then they were more or less distant, rarely coming into the houseboat, but lingering in a neighbourly way about doors and windows, and whispering assurances of their regard through some crossed wires that we happened to have there.

One of the chief causes of illness among the colonists, impure water, we did not have to contend with. In the early days of James Towne, the river was the only water supply; later, shallow wells were dug; both the river and the wells furnished impure, brackish water. To-day, two artesian wells are flowing on the island. As we got our supply from them, we often thought of how those first settlers suffered and died for want of pure water, when all the while this inexhaustible supply lay imprisoned beneath their cornfields. But even the water from the arte-

sian wells we took the precaution to boil. So, pitting screens against mosquitoes and the teakettle against water germs, we lived on, chill-less and fever-less in the marshes of Back River.

CHAPTER VII

SEEING WHERE THINGS HAPPENED

WE were fortunate in visiting Jamestown Island after considerable had been accomplished in the way of lessening the number of its historic sites. For a long while, almost every important event in its story had occurred at so many different places that it was scarcely possible for the pilgrim to do justice to them all.

But, some time before our visit to the island, an era of scientific investigation set in; researches were made among old musty records; and even the soil was turned up in order to determine the place where this or that event really did happen. The reduction in the number of places of interest was astonishing. In every instance, it was found that the historic event in question had happened at but a single place; and consequently all its other time-honoured sites suddenly became unhistoric soil.

An instance or two will serve to illustrate.

Upon our visit to James Towne, we found that the site of the colonists' first fort (long variously fixed at several points along the river front) was now limited to a single spot near the caretaker's cottage; so that all the brave fighting that had been going on at those other sites, had been for nothing.

In like manner, it had long been well established that Pocahontas and John Rolfe were married in the church whose tower is yet standing; also in the brick and wood church that just preceded this one; also in a rough timber church that just preceded that one. Each of these edifices was the true, genuine scene of the romantic event.

But, under the new arrangement, we found only one church where Rolfe and Pocahontas were married — just the old timber one. Indeed, in this instance, the work of elimination seemed almost unduly rigorous. The other churches were set aside upon circumstantial evidence merely; there being nothing against them except that they were found to have been built some years after the ceremony.

On the whole, however, the work of fixing sites authoritatively was doubtless just. In any event, there was no opportunity for us to protest; for by the time we got to the island, they had everything down on a map

in a book. We bought a copy of the book, and resolved to stage by it the events of the James Towne story. We resolved also to be most methodical from now on; and to "do" things as nearly as possible in the same order as the colonists had done them.

So one morning we gathered up our authorities and started out to see where the settlers first landed and where they first lived. According to the map, that historic, first landing-place would be anything but a landing-place to-day; for figure "25" (that was it) stood well out in the river. The loss by erosion had been great along that part of the shore since those first settlers arrived. But even though the landing-place could not be seen, one could look out on the waters anyway and see where it used to be.

At first we feared that there might be some trouble in telling where the "25" on the map would be on the water. But it was a very simple thing to do, largely owing to the thoughtfulness of the settlers in landing almost opposite a jetty that runs out from the shore a little above the Confederate fort.

Upon reaching the river front of the island, we took our bearings from the map and walked slowly toward the water's edge, being careful not to walk too far as the water's edge

VIEW FROM THE CONFEDERATE FORT.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FIRST LANDING - PLACE.

is so much closer in now than it used to be. Going to the uppermost of the several jetties, we sighted along it straight out over the water and kept on looking, in accordance with the measurements on the map, until we had looked one hundred and thirty-five yards; then, turned our eyes sharply to the right and looked thirty-three and one third yards more. We then had the satisfaction of feeling that the spot our eyes rested upon was, in 1607, on the shore of the island, and was the place where the original settlers first landed. Nor was our satisfaction at all dampened by the discovery that the spot was two spots — Nautica gazing spellbound at one place, and the Commodore at another.

After all, it made very little difference, for the settlers did not stay where they landed anyway.

They seem to have built their fort and their little settlement within it about five hundred feet farther down stream and some distance back from the shore. It was in the form of a triangle and had an area of about an acre. Its entire site has been generally supposed to be washed away, but the recent researches show that such is not the case. A considerable part of it is left and is now safe behind a protecting sea-wall. As, at the time of our

visit, nothing marked this remnant of the historic acre, we undertook to locate it. Fortunately, the Confederate fort stands in such position as to help in running the boundaries by the map. For a rough approximation, all we had to do was to get Mr. Leal, the caretaker, to stand at the most westerly angle of the fort, and his son on the sea-wall at the lower end of the fort, and Henry on the sea-wall a hundred yards farther up stream; then, straight lines connecting these three men enclosed all that is left of that first little fortified settlement where Anglo-Saxon America began. While the three men stood at the three corners, we took a photograph of the historic bit of land; and long after they had gone we lingered reflectively about it.

Here, in that spring of 1607, within the strong palisade, the settlers built their first cabins. Here, Captain Newport left them, and sailed back to England. Here, too, he found them again — a pitiful few of them — when he returned the next winter with reinforcements for the colony. By another winter, the palisaded village had extended somewhat, mostly eastward. It then included, so far as we could make out, all the land now within the Confederate fort and probably also the site of the present ruined church and

LOCATING WHAT IS LEFT OF THE SITE OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT.

graveyard. Upon this little four-acre settlement hung the destiny of a hemisphere for the next few years.

We trudged about within the old town limits and tried to picture the chief events of those years; but we could not remember what they were; so we sat down on the grassy fort, regardless of ticks and redbugs, to read up some more. For a while there was no sound but the twitter of the birds and the murmur of the river. Then the Commodore found something in his book, and he began very solemnly to tell of how on that very spot the colonists endured the horrors of the "Starving Time." At this there was such a genuine exclamation of pleasure from Nautica that the Commodore knew he was too late; she had not even heard. She had found something in her book too, and was already announcing that it was right there that John Rolfe and Pocahontas were married.

But the Commodore insisted that his story came first, as Nautica's romantic event was not until 1614, while his famine was in 1609-10. Nautica sighed resignedly as she agreed that we should starve first and get married afterward.

After all, we found that we could not speak lightly, sitting there in the midst of the scene

of the "Starving Time." By the winter of 1609-10 there were perhaps five hundred persons in this little settlement by the river, including now, unfortunately, some women and children. When there was no more corn, the people managed for a while to keep alive on roots and herbs; then, half-crazed by starvation, they fell to cannibalism. Gaunt, desperate, de-humanized, they crouched about the kettle that held their own dead. A Bible fed the flames, cast in by a poor wretch as he cried, "Alas! there is no God!"

The succeeding spring brought two ships, a belated portion of one of the "Supplies." But sixty of the five hundred colonists were found alive — sixty haggard men, women, and children, hunger-crazed, huddled behind the broken palisades. Sadly suggestive must have seemed the names of the two vessels that appeared upon that awful scene — Patience and Deliverance. But the deliverance that they brought was of a poor sort. They had not on board provisions enough to last a month.

It was decided that it was vain for the colony to try to hold out longer. James Towne, upon which so much blood and treasure had been spent and that had seemed at last to give England a hold in the New

World, must be abandoned. To the roll of drums, the remnant of the colony boarded the vessels, sails were set, and the little ships dropped down the river bound for far-away England.

The last sail passed around the bend in the stream, and only a desolate blotch in the wilderness was left to tell of England's attempt to colonize America; only a great gash in the forest, there in the quiet and the sunlight, at the edge of the river. Within it were the shapeless ruins of those queer things the pale-faces had made — broken palisades, yawning houses, the tottering thing they called a church; and, all about, the hideous, ghastly traces of living and of dying. The sun went down; and, in the gloom of the summer night, from the forest and the marsh wild things came creeping to the edge of the clearing, sat peering there, then ventured nearer — curious, suspicious, greedy. Soft, noiseless, and ghost-like was the flight of the great owl through the desolation, and his uncanny cry and the wail of the whippoorwill filled the night as with mockery and mourning.

Quick, startling, and almost miraculous was the next change in the scene: a change from the emptiness of desolation to the bus-

tling fulness of life and colour — the harbour dotted with ships, the little village crowded with people, James Towne alive again. For even in the dark hour of abandonment, it was not destined that the settlement should perish. Even as the colonists sailed down the James, a fleet bearing reinforcements and stores of supplies was entering the mouth of the river. The settlers were turned back; and following them came the fleet, bringing to deserted James Towne not only new colonists, but pomp, ceremony, and the stately, capable new governor, Lord Delaware.

"He was the one who went to church with so much show and flourish, wasn't he?" asked Nautica.

"Yes," answered the Commodore confidently, as he happened to have his book open at the right page. "Lord Delaware attended the little church in the wilderness in all state, accompanied by his council and guarded by fifty halberd bearers wearing crimson cloaks. He sat in a green velvet chair and —"

"Where do you think that church was?" interrupted Nautica.

"Right near here. They say it stood about a hundred yards above the later one whose ruins are over there in the graveyard. And in that church Lord Delaware and his council—"

"Yes," Nautica broke in again. "That was the church that they were married in — John Rolfe and Pocahontas."

"To be sure," said the Commodore. "Let the wedding bells ring. It is time now for the ceremony."

And a strange ceremony it must have been that the little timber church saw that April day in the year 1614, when the young colonist of good English family linked his fate with that of the dark-skinned girl of the tepee. It was the first marriage of Englishman and Indian in the colony, and meant much to the struggling settlers in furthering peaceful relations with the savages. Speaking in the society-column vernacular of a later day, the occasion was marred by the absence of the bride's father. The wary old chieftain was not willing to place himself within the power of the English. But the bride's family was represented by two of her brothers and by her old uncle, Opachisco, who gave her away. Other red men were present. Doubtless the governor of the colony, Sir Thomas Dale, who much approved the marriage, added a touch of official dignity by attending the ceremony resplendent in uniform and accompanied by colonial officials.

It was a strange wedding party. While

the minister (Was it the Reverend Richard Buck or the good Alexander Whittaker?) read the marriage service of the Church of England, the eyes of haughty cavalier and of impassive savage met above the kneeling pair and sought to read each other. And a strange fate hung over the pale-face groom and the dusky bride — that in her land and by her people he should be slain; that in his land and among his people she should die and find a lonely grave beside an English river.

"That is just one marriage that you have been so interested in, isn't it?" The Commodore's tone was one to provoke inquiry.

"Just one?" repeated Nautica. "Why, to be sure, unless it takes two weddings to marry two people."

"Just one wedding," persisted the Commodore. "Now, I am interested in dozens and dozens of weddings that happened right here, and all in one day."

There were several things the matter with James Towne from the outset. Prominent among them was the absence of women and children. After a while a few colonists with families arrived; but, to introduce the home element more generally into the colony, "young women to make wives ninety" came

from England in 1619. The scene upon their arrival must have been one of the most unique in the annals of matrimony. The streets of James Towne were undoubtedly crowded. The little capital had bachelors enough of her own, but now she held also those that came flocking in from the other settlements of the colony. The maids were not to be compelled to marry against their choice; and they were so outnumbered by their suitors that they could do a good deal of picking and choosing. With rusty finery and rusty wooing, the bachelor colonists strove for the fair hands that were all too few, and there was many a rejected swain that day.

We might have forgotten the other important events that had happened round about where we were sitting, in that first little town by the river, if a coloured man had not wandered our way. He had driven some sightseers over from Williamsburg, and while waiting for them to visit the graveyard, he seemed to find relief in confiding to us some of his burden of colonial lore and that his name was Cornelius. We had over again the story of Rolfe and Pocahontas, but it seemed not at all wearisome, for the new version was such a vast improvement upon the one that we got out of the books. However,

his next statement eclipsed the Pocahontas story.

"De firs' time folks evah meck dey own laws for dey se'fs was right heah, suh, right in dat ole chu'ch."

While again facts could not quite keep up with Cornelius, yet it was true that our little four-acre town had seen the beginnings of American self-government. So early did the spirit of home rule assert itself, that it bore fruit in 1619, when a local lawmaking body was created, called the General Assembly and consisting in part of a House of Burgesses chosen by the people. On July 30 of that year, the General Assembly met in the village church — the first representative legislature in America. The place of meeting was not, as is often stated, the church in which Rolfe and Pocahontas were married, but its successor — the earliest of the churches whose ruined foundations are yet to be seen behind the old tower.

Perhaps our thoughts had wandered some from Cornelius, but he brought them back again.

"Dey set in de chu'ch an' meck de laws wid dey hats on," he asserted.

And as the House of Burgesses had indeed followed in this respect the custom of the

English House of Commons, we were glad to see Cornelius for once in accord with other historians.

Then, Nautica spoke of how the very year that saw the beginning of free government in America saw the beginning of slavery too; and she asked Cornelius if he knew that the first coloured people were brought to America in 1619 and landed there at James Towne.

"Yas'm; ev'ybody tole me 'bout dat. Seem like we got heah 'bout as soon as de white folks."

It was a comfortable view to take of the matter, and we would not disturb it.

Cornelius told us other things.

"Dis, now, is de off season for touris'," he explained. "We has two mos' reg'lar seasons, de spring an' de fall, yas, suh. I drives right many ovah heah from Willi'msburg. I's pretty sho to git hol' of de bes' an' de riches'. An' I reckon I knows 'bout all dere is to be knowed 'bout dis firs' settlemen'. I's got it all so's I kin talk it off an' take in de extry change. I don' know is you evah notice, but folks is mighty diffrunt 'bout seein' dese ole things. Yas, suh, dey sut'n'y is. Some what I drives jes looks at de towah an' nuver gits out de ker'ige; an' den othahs

jes peers into ev'ythin'. Foh myse'f, now, I nuver keers much 'bout dese ole sceneries; but den I reckon I would ef I was rich."

CHAPTER VIII

PIONEER VILLAGE LIFE

THAT first little four-acre James Towne, located in the neighbourhood of the present Confederate fort, soon outgrew its palisades. In what may be called its typical days, the village stretched in a straggling way for perhaps three quarters of a mile up and down the river front, and with outlying parts reaching across the island to Back River. It usually consisted of a church, a few public buildings, about a score of dwellings, and perhaps a hundred people.

One of the principal streets (if James Towne's thoroughfares could be called streets) ran close along the water front. While it must once have had some shorter name, it has come down in the records as "the way along the Greate River." Here and there traces of this highway can still be found; and the mulberry trees now standing along the river bank are supposed to be descendants of those that bordered the old village highway.

Next came Back Street upon which some prominent people seem to have lived. Apparently leading across the head of the island from the town toward the isthmus was the "old Greate Road." There still appear some signs of this also near the graveyard. Besides these highways there were several lanes and cart-paths.

The eastward extension of the village, called New Towne, was the principal part. It was the fashionable and official quarter. Here lived many "people of qualitye." Royal governors and ex-governors, knights and members of the Council had their homes along the river front, where they lived in all the state that they could transplant from "London Towne."

The buildings, in the early days of wood and later of brick, were plainly rectangular. The later ones were usually two stories high with steep-pitched roofs. Some of the dwellings, or dwellings and public buildings, were built together in rows to save in the cost of construction. Probably most of the homes had "hort yards" and gardens. The colonists were not content with having about them the native flowers and fruits and those that they brought from England; but they made persistent efforts for years to grow in their

gardens oranges, lemons, pomegranates, and pineapples.

Usually there was not much going on in old James Towne, but periodically the place was enlivened by the sessions of the General Assembly and of the Court. At such times the planters and their following gathered in; and then doubtless there were stirring days in the village capital of "His Majesty's Colony of Virginia." Barges of the river planters were tied alongshore, and about the "tavernes" were horses, carts and a very few more pretentious vehicles. Many of the people on the streets were in showy dress; though only the governor, councillors, and heads of "Hundreds" were allowed to wear gold on their clothes.

James Towne, in her later days, seems to have had a "taverne" or two even when she had scarcely anything else; and doubtless these "alehouses" were the centres of life in those bustling court and assembly days. For not only was deep drinking a trait of the times, but many of the sessions both of the Assembly and of the Court were held in the "tavernes." Three or four State-houses were built; but with almost suspicious regularity they burned down, and homeless Assembly and Court betook themselves and the

affairs of the colony to the inns. There, in the ruddy glow of the great fireplaces, the judges could sit comfortably and dispense justice tempered with spirits.

So life in James Towne went on until the village had completed almost a hundred years of existence. But this was accomplished only by the most strenuous efforts. When at last, in 1699, the long struggle was given up and the seat of government was removed to Williamsburg, nothing but utter dissolution was left for James Towne.

The fated little village had played its part. Through untold suffering and a woeful cost of human life, it had fought on until England obtained a firm hold in America — a hold that was to make the New World essentially Anglo-Saxon. Then this pioneer colony's mission was ended. It was not destined to have any place in the great nation that its struggle had made possible. One by one the lights in the poor little windows flickered and went out. The deserted hearthstones grew cold. Abandoned and forgotten, the pitiful hamlet crumbled away.

James Towne dead, the island gradually fell into fewer hands until it became, as it is to-day, the property of a single owner; simply a plantation like any other. And yet,

AN EXCURSION DAY AT JAMESTOWN ISLAND.

how unlike! Even were every vestige of that pioneer settlement gone forever, memory would hold this island a place apart. But all is not gone. Despite decay and the greedy river, there yet remains to us a handful of ruins of vanished James Towne. Despite a nation's shameful neglect, time has spared to her some relics of the community that gave her birth — a few broken tombs and the crumbling tower of the old village church. Every year come many of our people to look upon these ancient ruins and to pause in the midst of hurried lives to recall again their story.

CHAPTER IX

GOOD-BYE TO OLD JAMES TOWNE

Two or three times we ran the houseboat around in front of the island. On one occasion we took the notion to stop at places of interest along the way. Upon coming out from Back River, we spent some time poking about in the water for the old-time isthmus. We were not successful at first and almost feared that, after raising it for our own selfish purposes some days before, we had let it go down again in the wrong place.

This troubled us the more because we had hoped to settle a vexed question as to how wide an isthmus had once connected the island with the mainland. Nautica insisted that the width had been ten paces because a woman, Mrs. An. Cotton, who once lived near James Towne, had said so. But the Commodore pointed out that we had never seen Mrs. Cotton, and that we did not know whether she was a tall woman or a little dumpy woman; and so could not have the slightest idea of

GADABOUT LOOKING FOR THE LOST ISTHMUS.

A VISIT TO THE "LONE CYPRESS."

how far ten paces would carry her. On his part, he pinned his faith to the statement of Strachey, a man who had lived in James Towne and who had said that the isthmus was no broader than "a man will quaite a tileshard." But this Nautica refused to accept as satisfactory because we did not know what a "tileshard" was nor how far a man would "quaite" one. So we were naturally anxious to see which of us was right.

After a while we found traces of the isthmus. And the matter turned out just as most disputes will, if both parties patiently wait until the facts are all in — that is, both sides were right. The soundings showed the isthmus to shelve off so gradually at the sides that we found we could put the stakes, marking its edges, almost any distance apart. So, the width across the isthmus could very well be ten of Mrs. Cotton's paces, no matter what sort of a woman she was; and it could just as well be the distance that "a man will quaite a tileshard," be a tileshard what it may.

Now, coasting along the end of the island, we had designs on the "Lone Cypress" for a sort of novel sensation. We approached the hoary old sentinel carefully, for it would be a sin to even bark its shaggy sides; and, dropping a rope over a projecting broken

"knee," we enjoyed a striking object lesson on the effects of erosion. In several feet of water, and nearly three hundred feet from land, our houseboat was tied to a tree; tied to a tree that a hundred years before stood on the shore — a tree that likely, in the early days of the colony (for who knows the age of the "Lone Cypress"?), stood hundreds of yards back on the island. But it may never be farther from shore than we found it; for there, glistening in the sunshine, stood the sea-wall holding the hungry river at bay.

Carefully slipping our rope from the tree, we let the tide carry us out a little way before starting an engine. Then, bidding goodbye to the old cypress, we moved on along the shore. We were aware from our map of ancient holdings that we were ruthlessly cutting across lots over the colonial acres of one Captain Edward Ross; but, seeing neither dogs nor trespass signs, we sailed right on. The Captain would not have to resort to irrigation on his lands to-day.

While dawdling about this submerged portion of old James Towne, we thought we would make a stop at the spot where those first settlers landed. After consulting the map, we manœuvred the houseboat so as to enable us to do some rough sort of triangu-

lation with the compass, and finally dropped anchor, satisfied that we were at the historic spot, even though it was too wet to get out and look for the footprints. And there, well out on the yellow waters of the James, Gadabout lay lazily in the sunshine where Sarah Constant was once tied to the bank; where those first settlers stepped ashore; where America began.

After following the island a little farther down stream, we cast anchor in a hollow of the shore-line near the steamboat pier. It was not much of a hollow after all and really formed no harbour. When the west wind came howling down the James, picking up the water for miles and hurling it at Gadabout, our only consolation lay in knowing that it could not have done that if we had only got there two or three centuries earlier. At that time, the point, or headland, upon which the colonists landed reached out and protected this shallow bay below. Doubtless, throughout James Towne days, the smaller vessels found fair harbour where Gadabout one night rolled many of her possessions into fragments, and her proud commander into something very weak and wan and unhappy.

In the last few years, there has been an awakening of interest in long-forgotten James

Towne. To Mrs. Edward E. Barney for her generous gift of the southwest corner of the island to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, and to that Society for its work in staying the course of decay and the hand of vandalism, our country is indebted.

The recent researches of Mr. Samuel H. Yonge too have added new interest. It had long been supposed that almost the entire site of the ancient village was lost in the river. Mr. Yonge has shown that in fact but a small part of it is gone. He has even located on the island the exact sites of so many of the more important village buildings that, it is said, old James Towne could be practically reproduced in wood and brick from his map, based upon the ancient records.

To verify his work, Mr. Yonge undertook (in 1903) to discover the buried ruins of a certain row of buildings that the records described as made up of a State-house, a "country house," and three dwellings. The search was begun with a steel probe, which struck the hidden foundations within twenty-five feet of their position as indicated on his plat. Then the Association began excavating; the foundations were uncovered, and are now among the things to see on the island.

ONE OF THE EARLIEST EXCAVATIONS.

HUNTING FOR THE FIRST STATE HOUSE.

As Mr. Yonge's map shows the larger part of the site of James Towne to be lying to the east of the church tower and outside of the A. P. V. A. grounds, the Daughter of the Island was interested too in seeing what probe and pick and shovel could do.

It was at one of James Towne's old homes that we next met her. The meeting, judging from our map of the village, was probably at Captain Roger Smith's, though one could not be sure. There was no name on the door, nor indeed any door to put a name on, nor indeed any house to put a door on — just an ancient basement that the Daughter of the Island had discovered and was having cleaned out. It badly needed it, nothing of the kind having been done perhaps for over two hundred years.

"Come and see my find," she cried.

The testing probe having struck something that indicated a buried foundation, there in the black pea field, this young antiquarian had put men at work and was being rewarded by finding the ruins of some ancient house. Portions of two rooms had been disclosed and the stairway leading down into one of them.

"Come down the stairs," said the proud lady in the cellar.

"Oh, what narrow steps!" Nautica exclaimed.

"They used to build out those brick treads with wood to make them wider," explained our hostess. "You can see where the wooden parts have been burned away."

The two rooms were paved with brick, and in one a chimney-place had come to light. Everywhere were bits of charred wood. Did no place in James Towne escape the scourge of fire? A kitten came springing over the mounds of excavated earth and began to prowl about the old fireplace. Except for a skittish pebble that she chased across the empty front, she found nothing of interest; no hint of savoury odours from the great spit over the blazing logs that may have caused a James Towne cat to sit and gaze and sniff some two centuries or more ago.

But we suddenly left the frivolous kitten upon being told of what had been found in the other room just before we came. It was a heavy earthen pot sunk below the floor. We crouched about it with great interest, chiefly because we did not know what it was for. Perhaps it was merely to collect the drainage. Anyway it was not what the Daughter of the Island had fondly thought when it was first uncovered.

"I was sure," she laughed, "that I had found a pot of money."

Standing down there in the ruins we wondered what was the story of the old house. What feet had trod those paved floors? What had those walls seen and known of being and loving, of hopes and fears, of joys and griefs, of life and death? Of all this the uncovered ruin told nothing.

While we were at the island, three or four excavations were made and we watched them all with interest. When the steel probe had located the ruin, the digging and the excitement began. Slowly the buried walls came to light. Within the walls was usually a mass of debris to be thrown out — bricks of various sizes, shapes, and colours; cakes of the ancient shell lime; pieces of charred wood, and relics of all sorts. Some of the bricks were quite imperfectly made and had a greenish hue. We supposed them to be the oldest ones and to have been baked or dried in the sun before the colonists had kilns. Some of them had indentations that were evidently finger imprints.

"I wants to fin' dey ole papahs," said big John, digging heartily. "Dis hyer is a histoyacal ole place; an' I rathah fin' a box of dey ole papahs than three hunderd dollahs."

Among the coloured people was an unquenchable hope of finding a pot full of money.

It was a most interesting experience to sit in the brick rubbish and watch for the queer little relics that were thrown out now and then. No great finds were made, but the small ones did very well. There appeared an endless number of pieces of broken pottery; and the design of a blue dog chasing a blue fox was evidently a popular one for such ware in James Towne.

But where was the blue dog's head? The question grew to be an absorbing one. Each handful of dirt began or ended with a wrong piece of the blue dog mixed with bits of brass and iron and pottery that brought vividly to mind the scenes and the folk of that vanished village. Handful after handful of dirt ran through our fingers like hourglass sands of ancient days, and the clicking relics were left in our hands in the quest of the blue dog's head.

And this was the way things went. A piece of a bowl bearing most of the blue dog's tail; a woman's spur, gilt and broken, worn when merry eyes peeped through silken riding masks; a bit of Indian pottery with basketry marks upon it; a blue fox and the fore legs

of the blue dog; a shoe-buckle, silver too — must have been people of "qualitye" here; a piece of a cream white cup that may have been a "lily pot" such as the colonist kept his pipe tobacco in; pieces and pieces of the blue dog, but never a bit of a head; a tiny red pipe and a piece of a white one — so that must have been a "lily pot"; a door key, some rusty scissors, and a blue head — of the fox; glass beads, blue beads, such as John Smith told Powhatan were worn by great kings, thus obtaining a hundred bushels of corn for a handful of the beads; a pewter spoon, a bent thimble, and a whole blue dog — no, his miserable head was off.

We never became discouraged and are quite sure yet that we should have found the blue dog's head if we could have gone on searching. But by this time the summer was waning, and on up the river was much yet for Gadabout to see. It was a long visit that we had made at the island, yet one that had grown in interest as in days. Indeed only in the passing of many days could such interest come — could old James Towne so seem to live again.

Lingeringly we had dreamed along its forgotten ways, by its ruined hearthstones, and among its nameless tombs; and so dreaming

had seemed to draw close to the little old-time hamlet and to the scenes of hope and of fear, of joy and of despair, that had marked the planting of our race in America. Now, on the last evening of our stay at the island, we walked again the familiar paths; looked for the hundredth time down the great brown river that had borne our people to this place of beginning; stood once more beside the graveyard wall; then started toward the houseboat, turning for a last look at the broken church tower and to bid good night and good-bye to old James Towne.

CHAPTER X

A SHORT SAIL AND AN OLD ROMANCE

NEXT day, bustling about with making all things shipshape, we could scarcely realize that we were actually getting under way again. But when our mooring-lines were hauled in, Gadabout backed away from her old friend, the bridge, swung around in the narrow marsh-channel, and soon carried us from Back River out into the James.

And by this time how impressed we had become with the significance of that wide, brown flood — that Nestor of American rivers! When is the James to find its rightful place in American song and story? Our oldest colonial waterway — upon whose banks the foundations of our country were laid, along whose shores our earliest homes and homesites can still be pointed out — and yet almost without a place in our literature. Other rivers, historically lesser rivers, have had their stories told again and again, their beauties lauded, and their praises sung. But this great

pioneer waterway, fit theme for an ode, is to-day our unsung river.

Gadabout, with the wind in her favour and all the buoys leaning her way, made good progress. It was not long before we were looking back catching the last glimpses of the white sea-wall of Jamestown Island.

We now were on our way to pick up other bits of the river story, and especially those concerning the peculiar colonial home life on the James. When tobacco culture, with its ceaseless demand for virgin soil, led many of the colonists to abandon James Towne and to build up great individual estates, each estate had to have its water front; and old Powhatan became lined on both sides with vast plantations. Later, the lands along other rivers were similarly occupied. So pronounced was the development of plantation life that it affected, even controlled, the character of the colony and determined the type of civilization in Virginia.

The great estates became so many independent, self-sufficient communities — almost kingdoms. Each had its own permanent population including, besides slaves and common labourers, many mechanics, carpenters, coopers, and artisans of various kinds. An unbroken water highway stretched from each

plantation wharf to the wharves of London. Directly from his own pier, each planter shipped his tobacco to England; and in return there was unloaded upon his own pier the commodities needed for his plantation community.

Thus was established the peculiar type of Virginia society, the aristocracy of planters, that dotted the Old Dominion with lordly manor-houses and filled them with gay, ample life — a life almost feudal in its pride and power. In this day of our nation's tardy awakening to an appreciation of its colonial homes, a particular interest attaches to these old Virginia mansions, once the centres of those proud little principalities in the wilderness.

And the particular interest of Gadabout's people, as Jamestown Island faded from sight, attached to a few of the earliest and most typical of those colonial homes that we knew yet stood on the banks of the "King's River." From kindly responses to our notes of inquiry, we also knew that long-suffering Virginia courtesy was not yet quite exhausted, and that it still swung wide the doors of those old manor-houses to even the passing stranger. Our next harbour was to be Chippoak Creek, which empties into the river about

twelve miles above Jamestown Island. There we should be near two or three colonial homes including the well-known Brandon.

It seemed good to be under way again. There was music in the chug of our engines and in the purl of the water about our homely bows. The touch of the wind in our faces was tonic, and we could almost persuade ourselves that there was fragrance in the occasional whiffs of gasoline.

We soon came to an opening in the shore to starboard where the James receives one of its chief tributaries, the Chickahominy, memorable for its association with the first American romance. Though the tale is perhaps a trifle hackneyed, yet the duty of every good American is to listen whenever it is told. So here it is.

Of course the hero was Captain John Smith. How that man does brighten up the record of those old times! Well, one day the Captain with a small party from James Towne was hunting in the marshes of the Chickahominy for food, or adventure, or the South Sea, or something, and some Indians were hunting there also; and the Indians captured the Captain. They took him before the great chief Powhatan; and as John lay there, with a large stone under his head and

some clubs waving above him, the general impression was that he was going to die. But that was not John's way in those days; he was always in trouble but he never died. Suddenly, just as the clubs were about to descend, soft arms were about the Captain's head, and Pocahontas, the favourite daughter of the old chief, was pleading for the ever-lucky Smith. The dramatic requirements of the case were apparent to everybody. Powhatan spared the pale-face; and our country had its first romance.

To be sure, some people say that all this never happened. Indeed the growing skepticism about this precious bit of our history, this international romance that began in the marshes of the Chickahominy, is our chief reason for repeating it here. It is time for the story to be told by those who can vouch for it — those who have actually seen the river that flows by the marshes that the Captain was captured in.

On we went with tide, wind, and engines carrying us up the James. Dancing Point reached sharply out as if to intercept us. But the owner of those strong dark hands that happened to be at the wheel knew the story of Dancing Point — of how many an ebony Tam O'Shanter had seen ghostly revelry

there; and Gadabout was held well out in the river.

Again, how completely we had the James to ourselves! We thought of how, even back in those old colonial days, our little craft would have had more company. Here, with slender bows pushing down stream, the Indian canoes went on their way to trade with the settlers at James Towne; their cargoes varying with the seasons — fish from their weirs in the moon of blossoms, and, in the moon of cohonks, limp furred and feathered things and reed-woven baskets of golden maize. Returning, the red men would have the axes, hatchets, and strange articles that the pale-faces used, and the cherished "blew" beads that the Cape Merchant had given them in barter.

Here sailed the little shallops of the colonists as they explored and charted this unknown land. A few years later and, with rhythmic sway of black bodies and dip of many oars, came the barges of the river planters. Right royally came the lords of the wilderness — members of the Council perhaps, and in brave gold-laced attire — dropping down with the ebb tide to the tiny capital in the island marshes. And up the stream came ships from "London Towne," spread-

ing soft white clouds of canvas where sail was never seen before; and carrying past the naked Indian in his tepee the sweet-scented powders and the rose brocade that the weed of his peace-pipe had bought for the Lady of the Manor.

Now, Gadabout began to sidle toward the port bank of the river as our next harbour, Chippoak Creek, was on that side. Here the shore grew steep; and at one point high up we caught glimpses of the little village of Claremont. At its pier lay a three-masted schooner and several barges and smaller boats. Along the water's edge were mills, their steam and smoke drifting lazily across the face of the bluffs.

On a little farther, we came to the mouth of Chippoak Creek with the bluffs of Claremont on one hand, the sweeping, wooded shores of Brandon on the other, and, in between, a beautiful expanse of water, wide enough for a river and possibly deep enough for a heavy dew. We scurried for chart and sounding-pole. Following the narrow, crooked channel indicated on the chart, we worked our way well into the mouth of the stream and cast anchor near a point of woods. From the chart we could tell that somewhere beyond that forest wall, over near the bank

of the river, was the old manor-house that we had come chiefly to see — Brandon, one of America's most noted colonial homes.

Next morning we were ready for a visit to Brandon. But first, we had to let the sailor make a foraging trip to the village. One of the troubles about living in a home that wanders on the waters, is that each time you change anchorage you must hunt up new places for getting things and getting things done.

While it is charming to drop anchor every now and then in a snug, new harbour, where Nature, as she tucks you in with woodland green, has smiles and graces that you never saw before, yet the houseboater soon learns that each delightful, new-found pocket in the watery world means necessity for several other new-found things. There must be a new-found washerwoman, and new-found somebodies who can supply meats, eggs, vegetables, ice, milk, and water — the last two separate if possible. True, the little harbour is beautiful; but as you lie there day after day watching waving trees and rippling water, the soiled-clothes bags are growing fatter; and then too, even in the midst of beauty, one wearies of a life fed wholly out of tin cans.

ENTRANCE TO CHIPPOAK CREEK.

COVE IN CHIPPOAK CREEK.

Henry was a good forager; and we were confident, as his strong strokes carried him from the houseboat shoreward, that he would soon put us in touch with all the necessary sources of supply, so that in the afternoon we could make our visit to the old manor-house. And he did not fail us. His little boat came back well loaded, and he bore the welcome news that "Sally" (whoever she might be) would take the washing.

But now, a matter of religion got in between us and Brandon. A launch came down the creek; and, as we were nearly out of gasoline, the Commodore hailed the craft and made inquiry as to where we could get some. One of the two men aboard proved to deal in gasoline, and appeared to be the only one about who did. He had some of it then on the pier at Claremont; and would sell it any day in the week except Saturday. The rather puzzling exception he explained by saying that he was a Seventh-day Adventist. To be sure, it was then only Thursday; but as it seemed making up for bad weather that might prevent our running down to the pier next day, we arranged to take on a barrel of the gasoline that afternoon.

We started after a rather late dinner; and ran back down the river to where we had

seen the schooner and the barges the day before. Just as the Commodore made a nice, soft-bump landing at the pier, a man informed him that the gasoline had been carried to the Adventist's mill by mistake. So, we cast off our ropes again, and went farther down to where the little mills steamed away at the foot of the bluffs.

Off shore, several sloops and rowboats were tied to tall stakes in the water. We went as close to shore as we dared; and Gadabout crept cautiously up to one of the stakes, so as not to knock it over, and was tied to it. Then, the Commodore went ashore and arranged to have the gasoline brought out to us.

Presently, two negroes rolled the barrel into a lighter. They poled their awkward craft out to Gadabout and made fast to a cleat. It took a long time to pump the gasoline into cans, and then to strain it into our tank on the upper deck. The day was about over. Relinquishing our plan of visiting Brandon, we ran back to our Chippoak harbour, and our anchor went to bed in the creek as the sun went down.

CHAPTER XI

AT THE PIER MARKED "BRANDON"

It was late on the following afternoon when Gadabout was out of the creek, out in the river, and bound for the little pier marked *Brandon.*

A belated steamboat was swashing down stream, and a schooner, having but little of wind and less of tide to help it along, was rocking listlessly in the long swell. In the shadow of the slack sails a man sprawled upon the schooner's deck, while against the old-fashioned tiller another leaned lazily.

Gadabout had to make quite a detour to get around some shad-net poles before she could head in toward the Brandon wharf; and her roundabout course gave time for a thought or two upon the famous old river plantation.

Starting but a few years after those first colonists landed at Jamestown Island, the story of Brandon is naturally a long one. But, working on the scale of a few words to a century, we may get the gist of it in here.

Among those first settlers was one Captain John Martin, a considerable figure of those days and a member of the Council appointed by the King for the government of the colony. He seems to have been the only man who believed in holding on at James Towne after the horrors of the "Starving Time." He made vigorous protest when the settlers took to the ships and abandoned the settlement.

About 1616, he secured a grant of several thousand acres of land in the neighbourhood of this creek that we were now lying in, and the estate became known as Brandon — Martin's Brandon. The terms of the grant were so unusually favourable that they came near making the Captain a little lord in the wilderness. He was to "enjoye his landes in as large and ample manner to all intentes and purposes as any Lord of any Manours in England dothe holde his grounde." And he certainly started out to do it.

But soon the General Assembly attacked the lordly prerogatives of the owner of Martin's Brandon. It did not relish the idea of making laws for everybody in the colony except John Martin, and he was requested to relinquish certain of his high privileges. This he refused to do, saying, "I hold my patente

for my service don, which noe newe or late comers can meritt or challenge." After a while, however, he was induced to surrender the objectionable "parte of his patente," and manorial Brandon became like any other great estate in the colony.

After several changes of ownership, Brandon came into the possession of another prominent colonial family, the Harrisons. The founder of this Virginia house (the various branches of which have given us so many men prominent in our colonial and national life) was Benjamin Harrison, one of the early settlers, a large land holder, and a member of the Council. His son Benjamin (also a man of position in the colony and a member of the Council) was probably the first of the family to hold lands at Brandon.

But it was not until the third generation that the Harrisons became thoroughly identified with the two great plantations that have ever since been associated with the name; Benjamin Harrison, the third, acquiring Berkeley, and his brother Nathaniel completing the acquisition of the broad acres of Brandon. Berkeley passed to strangers many years ago; but Brandon has come down through unbroken succession from the Harrisons of over two centuries ago to the Harrisons of to-day.

That makes a great many Harrisons. And as it happened, while Gadabout was on her way that day to visit their ancestral home, a genealogical chart with its maze of family ramifications was lying on a table in the forward cabin, and Henry saw it.

"King's sake!" he exclaimed. "That must be the host they couldn't count. Don't you know John say how he saw a host no man could number? That's cert'nly them!"

As we approached the Brandon pier, we saw a man on it who proved to be the gardener and who helped to handle our ropes as we made our landing. Then, with the aid of a beautiful collie, he led us up the slope toward the still invisible homestead.

Entering the wooded grounds through quaint, old-fashioned gateways, we followed our guide along a trail that topped the river bluff, where honeysuckle ran riot in the shrubbery and tumbled in confusion to the beach below. The trail ended in a cleared spot on the crest of the bluff — a river lookout, where one could rest upon the rustic seat and enjoy the ever-varying picture of water, sky, and shore.

But we turned our backs upon it all, for to us it was not yet Brandon. Now, our course lay directly away from the river along a

Riverward Front of Brandon

broad avenue of yielding turf, straight through an aged garden. Above were the arching boughs of giant trees; below and all about, a wealth of old-fashioned bloom. The sunlight drifted through shadowing fringe-trees, mimosas, magnolias, and oaks. Hoary old age marked the garden in the breadth of the box, in the height of the slow-growing yews, and in the denseness of the ivy that swathed the great-girthed trees. It all lay basking in the soft, mellow light of sunset, in the hush of coming twilight, like some garden of sleep.

Suddenly, the grove and the garden ended and we were over the threshold of a square of sward, an out-of-door reception room, no tree or shrub encroaching. Beyond this was a row of sentinel trees; and then a massive hedge of box with a break in the middle where stood the white portal of Brandon. We could tell little about the building. The eye could catch only a charming confusion: foliage-broken lines of wall and roof; ivy-framed windows; and, topping all, just above the deep green of a magnolia tree, the white carved pineapple of welcome and hospitality.

In the softened light of evening, the charm of the place was upon us — old Brandon,

standing tree-shadowed and dim, its storied walls in time-toned tints, its seams and crannies traced in the greens of moss and lichen, its ancient air suggestive, secretive,

> "In green old gardens hidden away
> From sight of revel and sound of strife."

We entered a large, dusky hall with white pillars and arches midway, and with two rooms opening off from it — the dining-room on the one hand, the drawing-room on the other. In the old chimney-pieces, fire leaped behind quaint andirons taking the chill from the evening air.

And there in the dusk and the fire-glow, where shadows half hid and half revealed, where old mahogany now loomed dark and now flashed back the flickering light, where old-time worthies fitfully came and went upon the shadowy, panelled walls — we made our acquaintance with Brandon and with the gracious lady of the manor. Our talk ran one with the hour and the dusk and the fire-light — old days, old ways, and all that Brandon stands for.

When our twilight call was over, it was with dreamy thoughts on the far days of Queen Anne and of the Georges that we

went from the white-pillared portico down the worn stone steps and followed a side path back toward our boat. In the gloaming the side-lights were being put in place, and Gadabout turned a baleful green eye upon us, as though overhearing our talk of such unnautical things as gardens and heirlooms and ancestral halls.

Next morning there was much puffing of engines and ringing of signal bells down in Chippoak Creek. Gadabout went ahead and backed and sidled. And it was all to find a new way to go to Brandon. Mrs. Harrison had told us of a landing-place in the woods at the creek side from which a sort of roadway led to the house. Fortunately, our charts indicated, near this landing, a small depression in the bed of the creek where there would be sufficient depth of water for our houseboat to float even at low tide. At last, we got over the flats and into the hole in the bottom of the creek that seemed to have been made for us.

We rowed ashore to a yellow crescent of sandy beach shaded by cypresses where a cart-path led off through the woods. We called it the woods-way to Brandon. It followed the shore of the creek a little way, and through the leafy screen we caught glimpses

of Gadabout out in the stream, now with a cone-tipped branch of pine and again with a star-leaved limb of sweet gum for a foreground setting.

Farther along were many dogwood trees; and in the springtime these woods must be dotted with those white blossom-tents that so charmed the first settlers on their way up the river. Here, for the first time, we came upon the trailing cedar spreading its feathery carpet under the trees. Ferns lifted their fronds in thick, wavy clusters. The freshness from a night storm was upon every growing thing; a clearing northwest wind was in the tree-tops; and the air was filled with the spicy sweetness of the woodland.

The way led out of the shadow of the trees into the open, and we came upon "the quarters" — long, low buildings with patches of corn and sweet potatoes about them. Two coloured women were digging in the gardens and another was busy over an out-of-door washtub. A group of picaninnies played about a steaming kettle swung upon a cross-stick above an open-air fire. One fat brown baby sat in a doorway poking a pudgy thumb into a saucer of food and keeping very watchful eyes on the strangers. Beyond the quarters were barns and some small houses.

A SIDE PATH TO THE MANOR - HOUSE.

THE WOODS - WAY TO BRANDON.

And here was our first reminder of a distressing chapter in the story of Brandon. We knew that but few of these buildings were old-time outbuildings of the estate. The Civil War bore hard upon this as upon other homes along the James. It left little upon the plantation except the old manor-house itself, and that injured and defaced.

On ahead, we could see the great grove in which the manor-house stands, looming up in the midst of the cleared land like a small forest reservation. Our route this time brought us to the homestead from the landward side through an open park, and we got a better view of the building than the dense foliage on the other side had permitted. The house is of the long colonial type, consisting of a square central building, two large flanking wings, and two connecting corridors. It is built of brick laid in Flemish bond, showing a broken pattern of glazed headers. Each front has its wide central porch and double-door entranceway.

The emblem of hospitality that tops the central roof is truly characteristic of the spirit within. Old colonial worthies, foreign dignitaries, presidents and their cabinets, house-parties of "Virginia cousins," and "strangers within the gates" — all have known the open

hospitality of Brandon. And the two latest strangers now moved on assured of kindly welcome at the doorway.

Entering Brandon from the landward front, we found ourselves again in the large central hall. It is divided midway by arches resting on fluted Ionic columns and has a fine example of the colonial staircase. This hall and the drawing-room and the dining-room on either side of it cover the entire ground floor of the central building. Offices and bedrooms occupy the wings. The rooms are lofty, and most of them have fireplaces and panelled walls.

Through the east doorway one looks down a long vista to the river. In the sunlight it is striking: the shadows from the dense foliage before the portal lie black upon the grass; beyond is the stretch of sunny sward; and then the turf walk under meeting boughs, a green tunnel through whose far opening one sees a bit of brown river and perhaps a white glint of sail.

In drawing-room and dining-room are gathered numerous paintings forming a collection well known as the Brandon Gallery. It represents the work of celebrated old court painters and of notable early American artists.

IN THE DRAWING - ROOM.

In the drawing-room, a canvas by Charles Wilson Peale may be regarded as the portrait-host among the shadowy figures gathered there, its subject being Colonel Benjamin Harrison. He was friend and college roommate of Thomas Jefferson, and a member of the first State Executive Council in 1776. Against the dense background is shown a slender gentleman of the old school, with an intellectual, kindly face and expressive eyes.

About him is a distinguished gathering — dames and damsels in rich attire and languid elegance; gallants and nobles in court costume and dashing pose, jewelled hand on jewelled sword.

In the dining-room, the portrait hostess is found, the wife of the Colonel Harrison who presides in the drawing-room. She was the granddaughter of the noted colonial exquisite and man of letters, Colonel William Byrd, whose old home, Westover, we should soon visit on our way up the river. It was through her marriage to Colonel Harrison that there were added to the Brandon collection many of the paintings and other art treasures of the Byrd family, including a certain, well-known canvas that carries a story with it.

It is an old, old story — indeed the paint-

ing itself is dimmed by the passing of nearly two centuries; but just as the sweet face looks out from its frame ever girlish, so does perennial youth seem to dwell in the romance of the "Fair Maid of the James." The portrait is by Sir Godfrey Kneller. It shows a beautiful young woman. Her gray-blue gown is cut in a stiff, long-waisted style of the eighteenth century, yet still showing the slim grace of the maiden. The head is daintily poised. A red rose is in her hair and one dark curl falls across a white shoulder. Her face is oval and delicately tinted. She follows you with her soft, brown eyes, and her lips have the thought of a smile.

Such was the colonial beauty, Evelyn Byrd, daughter of Colonel William Byrd. Though her home was not here but at Westover, and there she sleeps under her altar-tomb, yet the girlish presence seems at Brandon too, where the winsome face looks down from the wall, and where we must pause to tell her story.

This Virginia girl was educated in London where she had most of her social triumphs. There she was presented at court and there began the pitiful romance of her life in her meeting with Charles Mordaunt. In all youth's happy heedlessness these two fell in love — the daughter of "the baron of the

James" and the grandson and heir of London's social leader, Lord Peterborough.

It seemed a pretty knot of Cupid's tying; but just here William Byrd cast himself in the role of Fate. Some say because of religious differences, some say because of an old family feud, he refused to permit the marriage. He brought his daughter back to Virginia where, as the old records say, "refusing all offers from other gentlemen, she died of a broken heart."

That day when we left the manor-house, we started homeward, or boatward, with our faces set the wrong way; for we wandered first into the old garden.

It is a typical colonial garden that lies down by the river — a great roomy garden where trees and fruit bushes stand among the blossoming shrubs and vines and plants. It is a garden to wander in, to sit in, to dream in. All is very quiet here and the world seems a great way off. Only the birds come to share the beauty with you, and their singing seems a part of the very peace and quiet of it all. The old-fashioned flowers are set out in the old-fashioned way. There are (or once were) the prim squares, each with its cowslip border, and the stiffly regular little hedgerows. One may hunt them all out now; but for so many

generations have shrub and vine and plant lived together here, that a good deal of formality has been dispensed with, and across old lines bloom mingles with bloom.

The old garden calendars the seasons as they come and go. As an early blossom fades, a later one takes its place through all the flowery way from crocus to aster.

Trifling, cold, and unfriendly seem most gardens of to-day in comparison with these old-fashioned ones. Perhaps the entire display in the modern garden comes fresh from the florist in the spring, and is allowed to die out in the fall, to be replaced the next spring by plants not only new but even of different varieties from those of the year before. Not so at Brandon. Here, the garden is one of exclusive old families. Its flower people can trace their pedigrees back to the floral emigrants from England. The young plants that may replace some dead ones are scions of the old stock. Strange blossoms, changing every spring like dwellers in a city flat, would not be in good standing with the blue flags that great- (many times great-) grandmother planted, nor with the venerable peonies and day lilies, the lilacs and syringas that remember the day when the elms and magnolias above them were puny saplings.

Even a huge pecan tree, twenty-one feet around, whose planting was recorded in the "plantation book" over a century ago, is considered rather a new-comer by the ancient family of English cowslips.

Here is restful permanence in this world of restless change. Loved ones may pass away, friends may fail, neighbours may come and go; but here in the quiet old garden, the dear flower faces that look up to cheer are the same that have given heart and comfort to generations so remote that they lie half-forgotten beneath gray, crumbling stones with quaint time-dimmed inscriptions.

CHAPTER XII

HARBOUR DAYS AND A FOGGY NIGHT

DAY after day, we lay in our beautiful harbour of Chippoak Creek as the last of the summer-time went by and as autumn began to fly her bright signal flags in the trees along the shore.

Sometimes we moored in the little depression that Nature had scooped out for us close by the Brandon woods; sometimes we scrambled out from it at high tide and went across and cast anchor by the Claremont shore. Now and then we would go for a run up the creek, or out for a while on the broad James.

It is well to stay in a pretty harbour long enough to get acquainted with it. By the time we could tell the stage of the tide by a glance at the lily pads, and could get in and out over the flats in the dark, and could go right to the deep place in Brandon cove without sounding, we had learned where the late wild flowers grew, that the washing would get scorched on one side of the creek

and lost on the other, that the best place for fishing was around behind the island, and that the Claremont "butcher" had fresh meat on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Gradually, our neighbours of marsh and woodland lost their shyness, and some of them paid us the compliment of simply ignoring us. Most of the blue herons flew high or curved widely past Gadabout — long necks stretched straight before, long legs stretched straight behind. But the Tragedian (he was the longest and the lankest) minded us not at all. At the last of the ebb, a snag over near the shore would suddenly add on another angle and jab down in the water, coming up again with a shiver and a fish. Then, it would approach the houseboat and stalk the waters beside our windows. The stage stride of the creature won for it the name of the Tragedian. Knowing the shyness of his kind we felt especially pleased by a still further proof of his confidence. One morning, in response to a cautious whisper from the sailor, we stole stealthily upon the after deck and saw that the Tragedian was, truly enough, "settin' on an awnin'-pole pickin' hisself."

There was a dead tree on our Brandon shore-line. It stood among tall pines and sweet gums and beeches as far up as they

went, after that it stood alone in the blue. We called it Old Lookout. A bald eagle used it for a watch-tower. Lesser birds dared plume themselves up there when the king was away: crows cawed and sidled along the smooth branches; hawks and buzzards came on tippy wing and lighted there; and even little birds perched pompously where the big eagle's claws had been.

But when the snowy head above the dark, square shoulders tipped Old Lookout, the national emblem had it all to himself. Occasionally he preened his feathers; but he did it in a bored, awkward way, as if forced on account of his valet's absence into unfamiliar details of toilet quite beneath his dignity. Now and then he would scream. It is hard to believe that such a bird can have such a voice. He always lost caste in our eyes when he had his little, choked-up penny whistle going.

The attractions of harbour life did not keep us away from the old manor-house. Once when Gadabout ran around to the river front, she found a yacht from Philadelphia at the pier; and so passed on a little way and cast anchor in a cove opposite the garden.

Few other notable houses in America, still used as homes, are the objects of so many

pilgrimages as the historic places on the James. Indeed, few people but the hospitable Virginians would so frequently and so courteously fling wide their doors to strangers.

When the yachting visitors were gone that day and we were at the old home engrossed in the architecture of the Harrison colonial cradle, there came the long blasts of the steamer Pocahontas blowing for the Brandon landing. Not that she had any passengers or freight for Brandon perhaps, or Brandon for her, but because all these river estates are postoffices and the Pocahontas carries the river mail. After a considerable time (for even the United States mail moves slowly through the sleepy old garden), a coloured boy brought in a bag with most promising knobs and bulges all over it.

The postoffice at Brandon is over in the south wing where there are pigeon-holes and desks and such things. But the family mail is brought into the great dining-room and there, in the good plantation way, it is opened on the old mahogany.

The mail that morning made a very good directory of the present-day family at Brandon. There were letters and packages for the mistress of the plantation and for the

daughter and the son living in the manor-house with her, and also for the other daughter and her husband, Mr. Randolph Cuyler, who live across the lawn in Brandon Cottage with its dormer windows and wistaria-draped veranda. Mrs. Harrison is the widow of Mr. George Evelyn Harrison, and the daughter of the late William Washington Gordon, who was the first president of the Central Railroad of Georgia and one of the most prominent men in that state.

Brandon to-day keeps up correspondence with relatives and friends in England and on the Continent, reads English papers and magazines, sends cuttings from rosebushes and shrubs across seas, makes visits there and is visited in turn. So, it was pleasant to have the reading of our own welcome letters diversified by bits of foreign news that came out of the bag for Brandon. We could imagine an expression of personal interest on the handsome face of Colonel Byrd, as he stood in court costume on the wall above us, when the wrappings were taken from a volume containing the correspondence of his old friend, the Earl of Orrery, and sent by the present Earl to Mrs. Harrison. In it were some of the Colonel's letters written from his James River home, and in which he spoke of how

"VENERABLE FOUR-POSTERS, RICHLY CARVED AND DARK."

his daughters missed the gaieties of the English Court. The torn wrappings and bits of string were gathered up and a little blaze was made of them behind the old fire-dogs. Then we were shown more of Brandon.

Up quaint staircases in the wings we went to the roomy bedrooms with their ivy-cased windows, mellow-toned panelling, and old open fireplaces. As daily living at Brandon is truly in the paths of ancestral worthies, so, at night, there are venerable four-posters, richly carved and dark, to induce eighteenth century dreams in the twentieth century Harrisons. Massive mahogany wardrobes, bureaus, and washstands are as generations of forebears have used them.

Some of the bedrooms once had small rooms opening off from them, one on either side of the fireplace, each having a window. An English kinswoman of the family says that such rooms were called "powdering rooms." Through holes in the doors, the colonial belles and beaux used to thrust their elaborately dressed heads into these rooms, that they might be powdered in there without the sweet-scented clouds enveloping silks and velvets too.

From bedrooms to basement is a long way; but we would see the old stone bench down

there where used to sit the row of black boys to answer bells from these rooms above. Just over the bench hangs still a tangle of the broken bell wires. When colonial Brandon was filled with guests, there must often have been a merry jangle above the old stone bench and a swift patter of feet on the flags. Standing there to-day, one can almost fancy an impatient tinkle. Is it from some high-coiffured beauty in the south wing with a message that must go post-haste — a missive sanded, scented, and sealed by a trembling hand and to be opened by one no steadier? or is it perhaps from some bewigged councillor with knee-buckles glinting in the firelight as he waits for the subtle heart-warming of an apple toddy?

Now, we were ready to go home; but we did not start at once. A stranger going anywhere from Brandon should imitate the cautious railways and have his schedule subject to change without notice. At the last moment, some new old thing is bound to get between him and the door. In our case, two or three of them did.

Somebody spoke of a secret panel. That sounded well; and even though we were assured that nothing had been found behind it, we went to the south wing to look at the hole

in the wall. At one side of a fireplace, a bit of metal had been found under the molding of a panel in the wainscoting. It was evidently a secret spring, but one that had long since lost its cunning; stiff with age and rust, it failed to respond to the discovering touch. In the end, the panel had to be just prosaically pried out. And, worst of all, the dim recess behind it was empty.

When we had peered within the roomy secret space and had wondered what had been concealed there and what hands had pressed the hidden spring, we might really have started for the houseboat if it had not been for the skull story. But there, just underneath a window of the secret-panel room, was another place of secrets. It was a brick projection from the wall of such peculiar form as to have invited investigation. When some bricks had been removed and some earth taken out, a human skull showed white and ghastly. Then, at the touch of moving air, it crumbled away. That was no story to start anywhere on, even in broad daylight; so we had another.

We were taken into the drawing-room and there, sharing honours with the portraits, was a little gold ring hanging high from the chandelier rosette. While not a work of art

like one of the canvases on the wall, it has its own sufficient charm — it is a mystery. The dainty gold band has hung above the heads of generations of Harrisons, and somewhere in the long line its story has been lost. Who placed the ring where it hangs, and whether in joy or in grief, nobody longer knows. But it will swing safely there while Brandon stands, for in this ancient house, down the ages undisturbed, come the mysteries and the ghosts.

That evening a wind came up and rain set in from a depressing dark-blue-calico sky. Gadabout did not take the trouble to run back into her creek harbour; but put down a heavier anchor and made herself comfortable for the night in the cove above the Brandon pier. The cradling boat and the patter upon the roof soon put us to sleep. Then something put us very wide awake again. We listened, but there was nothing to hear. The wind had died out and the boat had stopped rolling. In a moment, the long blast of a steamer whistle told what was the matter. In blanket-robe and slippers, the Commodore got quickly to a window, and found the river world all gone — swallowed up in fog.

Another weird, warning call out of the

A CORNER IN THE DINING-ROOM.

THE DRAWING-ROOM FIREPLACE.

mysterious, impenetrable mist; the steamer for Richmond was groping her way up the river. To be sure, anchored as we were so far inshore of the channel, we were well clear of the steamer's course; but in such heavy fogs the river boats often go astray. As succeeding blasts sounded nearer, the Commodore became anxious and, without waiting to turn out the crew, he started for the fog-bell.

But where was the fog-bell? Not where it ought to be, we well knew. Some changes in the cockpit had crowded it from its place, and for some time it had been stowed away — but where? The Commodore scurried from locker to locker.

"Couldn't we just as well whistle?" asked Nautica.

"No, no. A boat under way whistles in a fog, but one at anchor must ring a bell."

One more locker, and, "I've found it!" triumphantly cried the Commodore; but then, in dismay, "There goes the tongue out of the thing."

Suddenly came another blast from the steamer. She sounded almost atop of us, and the whistling was followed by a swashing of water as though her propeller had been reversed.

"Why don't you call Henry?" asked Nautica.

"No time now," said the Commodore. "I must find something to pound this bell with."

Of course there seemed nothing available. The Commodore seized a whisk broom, but dropped that in favour of a hair-brush; and then in the excitement some harder object was thrust into his hand and he started for the door.

Nautica hurried to a window, and now saw a blur of light through the fog, showing that the steamer had safely passed us; but, though she called joyously, she was not in time to stay the Commodore, who had already dashed into the cockpit beating the tongueless bell with her curling-irons.

When he was at last caught and silenced, we could hear voices on the steamer, orders being given, and then the rattle of running chain. She had given up trying to make headway in the fog, and was coming to anchor just above us.

We heartened up the hickory fire and dressed after a fashion; and sat down to talk things over. The steamer did not ring her bell, so we did not summon the sailor to apply dressing-table accessories to ours.

Going to a window now and then, we noticed that the fog was thinning; and at one place there seemed a luminous blur, indicating perhaps where the steamer lay. We wondered whether running so close upon Gadabout was what had determined the captain to cast anchor. And then we wondered other things about fogs and mists and bewildered ships.

Nautica sat studying the firelight (not exactly in a dreamy old fireplace, but through a damper-hole in the stove), and at length voiced the inspiration that she got.

"If only one could see things in a fog, it wouldn't be so bad," she said conclusively.

"No," came the answer dryly, "a fog that one could see in would be quite an improvement."

"Wait a moment," laughed Nautica. "I mean it isn't merely the dangers lurking in a fog, but the way you go into them that is so terrible. The dangers of a storm you can meet, looking them straight in the face; but those of a fog you have to meet blindfold."

"I thought of that when I got up to-night and stood by the window," said the Commodore. "As the steamer's whistle kept sounding nearer, I could imagine the great, blinded creature slowly groping its way up the river.

I think I quite agree that it would be nicer to have fogs that people could see in."

And we felt that Gadabout would be of the same way of thinking. Indeed, could we not hear her joining in as we talked, and good naturedly grumbling that if we couldn't have that kind of fogs, why then we ought to get close in shore among the crabs and the sand-fiddlers, where the big boats could not come; or else go into a quiet little creek with a sleepy little houseboat.

But by this time no one was listening to Gadabout. Any further fussy complaining of this little craft was drowned by the Commodore reading aloud. He had bethought him of a book containing some chapters on Brandon that we had got from the manor-house. And reading made us hungry; and there were two apple tarts on the upper shelf of the refrigerator (for had not the cook provided them "in case an' you should wish 'em befo' you retiah"?); and by the time the tarts were gone, so was the fog; and the steamer headed again for Richmond and we for Dreamland.

CHAPTER XIII

OLD SILVER, OLD PAPERS, AND AN OLD COURT GOWN

TOWARD the last of our stay in Chippoak Creek, the weather was bad; but it was surprising how agreeable disagreeable days could be at Brandon. It was dark and gloomy that afternoon when we got to looking at the old family silver, and even raining dismally by the time we were carefully unfolding the faded court gown; but on we went from treasure to treasure oblivious of the weather.

Fine and quaint pieces of old silver are among the family plate. Many of them bear the Harrison crest — a demi-lion rampant supporting a laurel wreath. And who would know what the weather was doing, when those ancient pieces were passing from hand to hand, and the fascinating study of hall marks was revealing dates more than two centuries past? There is even some ecclesiastical silver in the old home — the communion service once used in the Martin's Brandon Church, a building no longer standing. The inscription

tells that the service was the gift of Major John Westhrope, and the marks give date of about 1659.

But no one form of the antique can hold you long at Brandon. From out some drawer or chest or closet, another treasure will appear and lure you away with another story of the long ago. With the inimitable sheen of old silver still in our eyes, our ears caught the crackle of ancient parchment; and we turned to the fascinations of venerable records and dingy red seals and queer blue tax stamps. The papers were delightfully quaint and yellow and worn, but from their very age a little awesome too.

The most valued one of them all is the original grant of Martin's Brandon bearing date 1616 — four years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. The grant covers a page and a half of the large sheets of heavy parchment, and the ink is a stronger black than that on records a century younger.

On a worn paper dated 1702 is a plat of Brandon plantation. It shows that at that time the central portion of the manor-house had not been built as only two disconnected buildings (the present wings) are given. A part of the sketch is marked "a corner of the garden." So, for two hundred years (and

TREASURED PARCHMENTS, INCLUDING THE ORIGINAL GRANT OF 1616.

who knows how much longer?) there has been that garden by the river. Off at one side of the old map, we found our landing-place in the woods beside some wavy lines that, a neat clerkly hand informed us in pale brown ink, were the "meanderings of Chippoak Creek."

Poring so intently over those ancient papers with their great Old English capitals, their stiff flourishes, their quaint abbreviations, we should scarcely have been startled to see a peruked head bend above them and a hand with noisy quill go tracing along the lines of those long-ago "Whereases" and "Be it knowns."

But, instead, something quite different came out of the past: something very soft and feminine fell over the blotched old papers — the treasured silk brocade in which Evelyn Byrd was presented at the Court of George I. Like a shadowy passing of that famous colonial belle, was the sweep of the faint-flowered gown. A fabric of the patch-and-powder days is this, with embroidered flowers in old blues and pinks clustered on its deep cream ground. Its fashioning is quaint: the Watteau pleat in the back with tiny tucks each side at the slim waist line, the square low neck, the close elbow sleeves, the open front to display the quilted petticoat.

Mingled feelings rise at sight of the soft brocade whose bodice once throbbed with the happy heartbeats of this Virginia maiden, making pretty curtsy in rosy pleasure, the admiration of the English Court. Perhaps in this very gown she danced the stately minuet with young Charles Mordaunt; perhaps hid beneath its fluttering laces his first love sonnet. So, in those far colonial days it knew the life of her. The grace of the young body seems still to linger in the pale, shimmering folds; and the clinging touch of the old court gown is like a timid appeal for remembrance.

After that rainy afternoon at the manor-house, we were storm-bound aboard Gad-about for a few days. At last the weather cleared and we again thought of a trip ashore. There was yet a brisk wind; and for some time our rowboat rocked alongside, industriously bumping the paint off the houseboat, while we sat on the windlass box enjoying the fresh breeze in our faces and watching the driftage catch on our anchor chain. Of course one can sit right down on the bobby bow itself with feet hanging over, and poke with a stick at the flotsam. But that is only for moments of lazy leisure, not for a time when one is about to visit Brandon.

At last, we were ashore and again in the

"woods-way." That was the day we got into trouble, all owing to Nautica's passion for ancient tombstones. We were half way to Brandon when she concluded that it was not the manor-house that she wished to visit first, but the old graveyard. We stopped at the manager's house to inquire the way. The road led inland. It soon dipped to a bridge over a little stream, where the banks were masses of honeysuckle whose fragrance followed us up the slope beyond. On a little farther was a field with a grove in the centre of it that we knew, from the directions given us, contained the cemetery.

We entered the field, and had got almost to the grove when Nautica suddenly stopped, stared, and turned pale. The Commodore's glance followed hers; whereupon, he uttered brave words calculated to reassure the timid feminine heart, and in a voice that would have been steady enough if his knees had kept still. The bull said nothing.

Very soon, and without his moving at all, that bull was far away from us. We recognized at once that the field was properly his preserve and that we really had no right there; but we trusted that our intrusion in coming in would be atoned for by our promptness in getting out.

In the absorbing process of putting space between the bull and the houseboaters, the restlessness of the Commodore's knees was really an advantage. They moved so fast that he was able to keep in advance of Nautica, and so be ready to protect her if another bull should appear on ahead. When he felt satisfied that he need no longer expose himself in the van (and, incidentally, that the bull in the rear had been left out of sight), he slackened his pace. We managed to get down to a walk in the course of half a mile or so; and at last approached Brandon at a quite decorous gait.

There, we learned that we had gone to the wrong cemetery anyway — to the one that had belonged to the old Brandon Church whose communion service we had seen. The Harrison burying-ground was not far from the home.

So, with members of the household, we went out across the lawn and around a corner of the garden to the family graveyard. The first Benjamin Harrison, the emigrant, who died about 1649, is not buried here. His tomb stands near the great sycamore tree in the churchyard at James Towne. However, the tombs of his descendants, owners of Brandon, are (with one exception) in this old plantation burying-ground.

THE ANCIENT GARRISON HOUSE.

In the walk back to the house, we stopped to see what is probably the oldest, and in many respects the most interesting, building on the plantation. It is just an odd stubby brick house with a crumbling cellar-hut at one end. But family tradition says that it is one of the old garrison houses, or "defensible houses," built in early times for protection against the Indians. It certainly looks the part, with its heavy walls, its iron doors and shutters, and the indications of former loopholes. Upon those first scattered plantations, a characteristic feature was such a strong-house or "block-house" surrounded by a stockade or "palisado" of logs.

While this strong-house at Brandon must have been built after the terrible Indian massacre of 1622, yet it doubtless served as a place of refuge in later attacks. Many a time that dread alarm may have spread over this plantation. We thought of the hurrying to and fro; of the gathering of weapons, ammunition, bullet-molds, food, and whatever necessities there may have been time to catch up; and of the panic-stricken men, women and children fleeing from field and cabin to the shelter of the stockade and of the strong-house.

Back again in the manor-house, we spent our last hour at Brandon; for Gadabout was

to sail away next day. It was a colonial hour; for Brandon clocks tick off no other, nor would any other seem natural within those walls.

Sitting there in the old home, we slipped easily back into the centuries; back perhaps to the day of the great mahogany sofa that we sat upon. It all seemed very real. The afternoon sun — some eighteenth century afternoon sun — came in through deep-casemented windows. It lighted up the high, panelled room, falling warmly upon antique furniture about us, upon by-gone worthies on the wall, and (quite as naturally, it seemed) upon a colonial girl, who now smilingly appeared in the doorway. Bringing the finishing touch of life to the old-time setting, she came, a curl of her dark hair across a white shoulder and her gown a quaintly fashioned silk brocade.

This eighteenth century presentment was in kindly compliance with a wish that we had expressed on that rainy day when we were looking over Brandon treasures. It was Brandon's daughter in the court gown of her colonial aunt, Evelyn Byrd. And we thought in how few American homes could this charming visitor from the colonies so find the colonial waiting to receive her.

MISS HARRISON IN THE COURT GOWN OF HER COLONIAL AUNT, EVELYN BYRD.

Nowhere in the world, it is said, are there so many new, comfortable homes built for the passing day as in America; but also in no civilized country are there so few old homes. More and more, as this fact comes to be realized, will Americans who care for the permanent and the storied appreciate such colonial homesteads as Brandon, the ancestral home of the Harrisons.

CHAPTER XIV

A ONE-ENGINE RUN AND A FOREST TOMB

By the time we had finished our visit at Brandon, we were in the midst of the beautiful Virginia autumn. Though much of the warmth of summer was yet in the midday hours, the mornings were often crisp and the evenings seemed to lose heart and grow chill as they saw the sun go down.

Part of the houseboat was heated by oil stoves, but the forward cabin had a wood stove, and above it on the upper deck was our little sheet-iron chimney. It had a hood that turned with the wind and creaked just enough for company. So, during mornings and evenings and wet days, Gadabout smoked away, cozy and comfortable.

She was smoking vigorously on the day that we bade good-bye to Chippoak Creek. That was a glorious morning — one of those mornings when the sun tries to warm the northwest wind and the northwest wind tries to chill the sun, and between the two a tonic

gets into the air and people want to do things. We wanted to "see the wheels go round" (not knowing then that only one would go round); and we prepared to start for Kittewan Creek, a few miles farther up the James.

Kittewan Creek is no place in particular, but near it are two old plantations that historians and story-writers have talked a good deal about. These two estates, Weyanoke and Fleur de Hundred, having no longer pretentious colonial mansions, are often overlooked by the traveller on the James, who thereby loses a worthy chapter of the river story.

When our anchors came up out of the friendly mud of Chippoak Creek, we let the northwest wind push us across the flats and into the channel. Then we summoned the engines to do their duty. The port one responded promptly, but the other would do nothing; and as we ran out of the creek and headed up the river, the Commodore was appealing to the obdurate machine with a screw-driver and a monkey-wrench.

The tide was hurrying up-stream and the wind was hurrying down-stream, and old Powhatan was much troubled. Gadabout rolled awkwardly among the white-caps but continued to make headway. Pocahontas, the

big river steamer, was coming down-stream. We could see her making a landing at a wharf above us where a little mill puffed away and a barge was loading. Evidently, the steamer was to stop next at a landing that we were just passing, for there men and mules were hurrying to get ready for her. Now the starboard bank of the river grew high and sightly, but on the port side there was only a great waste of marsh.

The Commodore spent much time with the ailing motor. Once he lost a portion of the creature's anatomy in the bottom of the boat. Nautica found him, inverted and full of emotion, fishing about in the bilge-water for the lost piece. She offered him everything from the toasting-rack to the pancake-turner to scrape about with; but he would trust nothing of the sort, and kept searching until he found the piece with his own black, oily fingers.

"I believe the man that built this boat was a prophet!" he exclaimed as his face, flushed with triumph and congestion, appeared above the floor. "He said that if we put gasoline motors in, we should have more fun and more trouble than we ever had in our lives before; and we surely are getting all he promised."

As we rounded the next bend in the river,

STURGEON POINT LANDING.

AT THE MOUTH OF KITTEWAN CREEK.

we got the full force of the wind and, with but one engine running, it was a question for a while whether we were going to go on up the river or to drift back down stream. Fortunately, the James narrowed at this point, thus increasing the sweep of the tide that was helping us along, and slowly Gadabout pushed on, slapping down hard on the big waves and holding steady.

A short distance beyond Sturgeon Point was the indentation in the shore marking the mouth of Kittewan Creek. Old cypress trees stepped out into the river on either side, while a row of stakes seemed to indicate the channel of the little waterway. Sounding along we went in with four feet of water under us.

Our plan was to find an anchorage a little way up the creek, and then next day to start with the rising tide for a run on up to Weyanoke. Of course Weyanoke fronted upon the James, but our idea was to make a sort of back-door landing by running up this stream and in behind the plantation. There was no sheltering cove to lie in on the river front; and besides, to make the visit at the regular pier was so hopelessly commonplace. Any of the ordinary palace yachts could do the thing that way. But it took a gypsy craft like Gadabout to wriggle up the little back-

country creek and to land among the chickens and the geese and — bulls perhaps; but then all explorers must take chances.

Kittewan Creek is a marsh stream; yet for some distance in from the mouth tall cypresses stand along the reedy banks. These trees protected us from the high wind and made it easy for us to take Gadabout up the narrow watercourse.

As she moved slowly along, we were looking for an ancient tomb that we had been told stood on the left bank of the stream not far from the mouth — "the mysterious tomb of the James" some one had called it. While we could see nothing of it then, we resolved to search for it upon returning from our run up the creek to visit Weyanoke. But we were destined to see the tomb before seeing Weyanoke.

Upon reaching the first bend in the stream, our tree-protection failed us and Gadabout became so absorbed in the antics of wind and tide that she paid no further heed to any suggestions on our part as to the proper way to navigate Kittewan Creek. Her notion seemed to be to run down a few fish-nets whose corks were bobbing about on the water, and then to go over and hang herself up on some cypress stumps at the edge of the marsh. We

THE FOREST TOMB.

THE OLD KITTEWAN HOUSE.

insisted upon her going a little way farther up the creek. But a compromise was all that could be effected; anchors were dropped and operations temporarily suspended on both sides.

We had a much belated dinner, and then all went ashore to make inquiries and to get supplies at a house that stood on a bluff above the bend in the stream. It proved to be a very old building and quite a landmark. It was called the Kittewan house. There, we learned that the tomb we were looking for was on the bank almost opposite where our houseboat lay.

We found it close to the creek. It was an altar-tomb, broken and timeworn and almost covered with an accumulation of earth and moss and leaves. One corner support and one side of the caving base were gone, letting ferns and lichens find a home within, tender green fronds touching the shadowing slab above them.

The strange, unremembered grave was that of a woman. For, when we had scraped clear a little of the slab, we came upon the name Elizabeth. Our floating home was near enough to lend shovel and broom; and we undertook to free the tomb (that was itself being slowly buried) and to bring to light

again the chiseled story of the long-ago Elizabeth who lay in this lonely place.

When the granite slab was uncovered and swept clean, we were able to read most of the words upon it, although the stone was cut almost as deep by the little fingers of rain and of frost as by the graver's heavy hand that had itself gone to dust long ago. Slowly we found the words telling that there rested the body of Elizabeth Hollingshorst, whose husband, Thomas Hollingshorst, was a ship-master; that her father was Mr. Piner Gordon of the family of Tilliangus in Aberdeenshire, Scotland; and that she died November 30, 1728.

The father's name, Gordon (so proud a one in Aberdeenshire), and the use before it of the prefix Mr. (a term then synonymous with "gentleman" and never lightly given in those days of well-defined rank) show that this Elizabeth was of gentle birth. The words "Ship Master" tell of how the breath of the old North Sea had called Thomas Hollingshorst from the banks and braes and led him to point the bow of his merchant ship across seas, bound for England's far-away colony. Little would he dream — crowding canvas to speed his cargo to the Virginia plantations — that his gentle-born Elizabeth was to

find a grave in that feared American wilderness.

The longer we worked over the ancient stone the more we came to feel the pitiful meaning of it.

We felt that this Elizabeth was a true heart and a brave one, who ventured the perilous sea-voyage of the early days with her ship-master husband. She did not come as other women came — to make a home in the new land and to have friends and neighbours there. She came, a passing stranger, upon her husband's trading ship; a ship that would anchor but to exchange its English wares for the planter's tobacco, and then turn prow again to the perils of the sea. When illness came in the new, wild land, how distant must have seemed Aberdeenshire in those days of the little ship and the slow sail! And here, longing for one more sight of Scottish heather, this Elizabeth died.

Seeking for her a last resting-place, the stranger ship moved up the river and came to anchor at the mouth of this creek. They lowered her gently over the ship's side into a long-boat and then rowed up the stream into the forest. Here by the creek's side they buried her, and (doubtless by the ship's own compass) they orientated the forest grave.

Then again the ship sailed across seas and bore sad tidings to some family of Gordons in Aberdeenshire.

In those days it must have been long before the returning vessel could sail up the James, this time bearing the graven tomb from Scotland. For a little while, the stillness of the forest was once more broken, startling the timid woodland folk; and then these strangers from overseas were gone. Again the great silence fell and the wilderness took the grave to itself. Slowly it set upon the tomb its seal of moss and lichen and vine. Unmindful of the mark of human loss and grief, the wild folk came and went. Joyously the cardinal flashed his crimson wing above the darkening stone; the deer came to drink from the stream and lifted their heads to scent the breeze that came with the dawn through the cypress trees, across a forgotten grave; hard and incurious, the Weyanoke Indians slipped by like darker shadows in the forest gloom; and only the little night birds seemed to know or to care as they called plaintively in the marshes at twilight.

As we were about to leave the tomb, we bethought us that the anniversary of the death of this Elizabeth was drawing near. We heaped the holly with its glowing berries above

the crumbling stone. And still we lingered; for the Gordons of Tilliangus seemed very far away from this daughter of their house. As the sunset lights were fading, we saw a new moon pale on the tinted sky; and we thought of how for almost two centuries crescent moons had trembled from silver to gold above this forlorn grave on the bank of the Kittewan.

A short row in the dusk out upon the stream, and we stepped aboard Gadabout. She never seemed more cozy and homelike. A great bowl of pink and yellow chrysanthemums from Brandon's old garden and trailing cedar and ferns and red-berried holly added to the cheer. Soon our home-lights streamed from the broad windows out across the water, and some faint glow must have touched that lonely tomb on shore.

CHAPTER XV

NAVIGATING AN UNNAVIGABLE STREAM

In the morning the sun and the mist filled our little harbour with a golden shimmer, and all the marsh reeds were quivering in the radiance. The blue herons were winging out to the river, and the doves were weaving spells round and round the dormer-windowed cottage on the hill.

Gadabout's household was early astir ready for the run up Kittewan Creek. We had only to get a chicken or two at the house on the bluff, and then we should be ready to start at the turn of the tide. Imagine, then, our chagrin when the sailor returned with not only the chickens but the information also that we could not get the houseboat any farther up the stream, on account of numerous shallows and submerged cypress stumps.

Once more the charts were got out and spread upon a table. We still felt that if the sounding-marks were right Gadabout could navigate the stream. However, at two

places islands were shown where there seemed scarcely room in the creek for islands and Gadabout too; and if we had also to throw in a few cypress stumps for good measure, our prospects for visiting Weyanoke by the chickens-and-geese route were indeed not promising.

But we knew Gadabout and how we had taken the craft almost everywhere that people had told us she could not go. For, to our minds, one of the chief charms of houseboating lay in poking about in such out-of-the-way places.

Let the yacht reign supreme as the deep-water pleasure craft, that trails its elegance perforce ever up and down the same prescribed channels. The ideal houseboat is the light-draft water gypsy, that turns often from the buoyed course and wanders off into the picturesque world of little waters; along streamlets that lead in winding ways to quaint bits of nowhere, and into quiet shallows of forgotten lagoons that have fallen asleep to the lullaby of their own rushes.

So it was settled that our houseboat was to try to go up the creek to Weyanoke's back door, and again we were waiting only for the turn of the tide. When sticks and straws and frost-tinted leaves, floating down past us

toward the James, changed their minds and started back up the Kittewan, Gadabout went with them.

After a while the creek began to shallow rapidly and we kept the sailor on ahead in a shore-boat sounding, while we tried to keep the houseboat from running over him. The southerly breeze was gradually freshening and Gadabout began to show a corresponding partiality for the northern bank of the stream. But, on the whole, she was behaving very well and apparently the mutinous spirit of the day before had entirely disappeared. We had to stop just before coming to an island standing in a sharp turn of the little waterway.

"Looks like we can't make this bend, sir," called the sailor from the shore-boat. "There's a sure enough bar 'cross here."

By keeping at it, he managed to find a channel for going round on the port side of the island. Then he came aboard, started an engine, and we moved on again. But Gadabout had been deceiving us; she still had no notion of going up the creek. We were just starting to go around the island when she suddenly transferred her allegiance from the steering-wheel to the wind, and sidled off in the marshes till she brought up hard

aground. There was nothing to do but to wait for the rising tide.

Nautica got out the chart again to see where we were. At Weyanoke there are two plantations, an upper one and a lower one; and for a while she was busy measuring between the stream and the little black dots that indicated the plantation buildings. At last, after a final counting up on her fingers, she announced, "If we can get around six more bends of this curly stream, we shall be within less than half a mile of the house at Lower Weyanoke."

As the water rose around the houseboat, we threw out a kedge anchor, hauled off, and got under way again. Now, Gadabout started at once to go around the island — but (mutiny again!) she was going around on the wrong side. The Commodore and the sailor, with long poles, pushed frantically in the mud striving to set the unruly craft in the way she should go; but she was determined to take the wrong channel and was slowly getting the better of us.

"She's gittin' away from us, sir," called the sailor.

"I see she is," said the Commodore, "and I don't believe she can get around the island on this side."

But away she went, wind and tide carrying her up the wrong channel. Laughing at the amusing persistence of the craft, all we could do was to keep her away from the marshes and let her go.

The creek rapidly narrowed; the marsh gave way to woodland; and just ahead was but a small passage between island and mainland for us to go through. We pushed in between waving walls of autumn foliage. Branches tapped on our windows, and crimson sweet gum leaves pressed against the panes as if to make the most of their little moment for looking in.

Gadabout passed through the narrow opening without a stop, though carrying twigs and bright leaves away with her. We ran the next straight stretch of the creek, and at the bend came upon another island. Here shoals and cypress stumps quite blocked the channel. In a good, old landlubberly manner we hitched Gadabout to a tree and waited to see if the rising tide would make a way for us.

Houseboating was taking us into strange places. And yet what a comfortable way to journey into the world in the rough! Many are the advantages of houseboating over camping or any other form of outing. In a floating home one goes into the wild with-

HUNTING FOR THE CHANNEL.

APPROACHING A NARROW PLACE.

out sacrificing the comforts or even the essential refinements of life. For women it is an ideal way to visit Dame Nature.

But now the houseboaters upon Gadabout were becoming fearful lest Dame Nature had closed her doors on ahead of them and would not receive them up the Kittewan. It was good news when the sailor called from his rowboat that he had found a channel for going on around the island.

This time Gadabout showed a willingness to go just where we wished her to go, but insisted upon doing it stern-foremost or broadside. We ran her forward and backward and poled most vigorously; but after all had the humiliation of drifting around the island wrong end first.

After that there was little trouble in going up the stream. Before long an old homestead came in sight on a hill to our left, and we knew that it must be Lower Weyanoke. But an impassable marsh stretched along the stream, and there was no sign of a landing or of a roadway that might lead to the house. We kept on, curious now to see how far our houseboat could go. Suddenly we found out. She turned a bend and, there ahead, hummocks and stumps occupied about all there was left of Kittewan Creek.

The head of navigation had been reached for even our presumptuous craft. An anchor was cast; whereupon Gadabout swung to one side, bumped against a tree, and then settled herself comfortably in the marshes to await our pleasure. It would not do to let the falling tide catch us in that place. Fortunately, there was a marshy cove on one side of us, and by backing into that we got turned around and headed down stream again. We found a deep place that would do for an anchorage nearly opposite Lower Weyanoke, and close beside a little company of trees that showered Gadabout with red and yellow leaves.

When the tide fell, it disclosed many roots and stumps in the channel; and the sight of each one added to our sense of importance in having successfully navigated the stream. Later, some of the men from the Kittewan farm came along in a rowboat.

"Well, you did make it after all," they said. "We've been looking for you all along the creek, expecting to find you hung up on a cypress stump."

CHAPTER XVI

IN WHICH WE GET TO WEYANOKE

As Gadabout lay moored in Kittewan Creek, the houses of Weyanoke were not very far from us, and one of them was in plain sight; but the question was how to get to them. Wide stretches of marsh bordered the stream and a wire fence ran along the reedy edge. We began to be impressed with the advantage of approaching such a plantation in the customary way, by the river front.

But we had not lost zeal for the unconventional, and fortune favoured us. A man passing in a skiff told us that a road leading to the Weyanoke houses could be reached by rowing up a tiny bayou that joined the creek a short distance above us.

This bayou, he explained, was not one of those ordinary waterways that you can travel on just any time. In fact, for a good deal of the time it was not a waterway at all. But usually, when a half tide or more was in,

a rowboat could be taken up to the landing near the road.

So, one afternoon an untenanted houseboat was left lying in the sunshine and the marshes, all aboard having taken to the shore-boats and gone in search of the more solid portions of Weyanoke. Weyanoke is an Indian name and means "land of sassafras." In 1617 the Indian chief, Opechancanough, gave this land of sassafras to Sir George Yeardley, afterward governor-general of the colony; and his ownership gave early prominence to the place, though he did not live upon the plantation that he had here.

After several transfers of title, Weyanoke came into the possession of Joseph Harwood in 1665. Through many generations both the upper plantation and the lower one remained in the Harwood family; and Upper Weyanoke is still owned by descendants of Joseph Harwood, the family of the late Mr. Fielding Lewis Douthat.

In our search for this land of sassafras, a short row up the creek took us to the opening into the bayou. Here, there was a break in the wire fence along the creek guarded by a queer water-gate that hung across the entrance to the side stream. Holding the water-gate open and pushing our boats through,

LOWER WEYANOKE.

with what skill might be expected from persons who had never seen a water-gate before, we started up the tiny, winding channel.

On either hand the reeds were so tall that we were quite shut in by them; but reeds are never so beautiful as when outlined against the sky. Here and there, a stump or a cypress tree stood out in the water almost barring the way. Ducks were swimming about or absurdly standing on their heads in the shallows, and at our coming went paddling off into the sedges quacking their disapproval. Before the water quite gave out, we reached the little landing. Now our way led up from the lowland between hazy autumn fields where crows were busily gleaning and insects shrilled in shock and stubble.

The road ended in front of the house at Lower Weyanoke. The building is a large frame one and very old. It has had its full share of distinction, being for so many generations the home of the colonial family of Harwoods and of their descendants, the Lewises and the Douthats. Some years ago the plantation passed to strangers. From the riverward portico, we saw traces of an old garden whose memory is kept green by the straggling box that long ago bordered the fragrant flower-beds. On beyond was a glint

of the sun-lit river. A group of towering cottonwood trees, standing in the dooryard, is so conspicuous a feature of the landscape that it serves as a guide for the pilots on the river boats.

Leaving the sailor here to do some foraging in the neighbourhood, we went on to Upper Weyanoke. We followed a road that skirted corn fields and pasture lands, busy plantation life on every hand. One could but think of the very different scene that was here in the days of the Civil War. Few places suffered at that time more than did Weyanoke. Here, part of Grant's army crossed the James in the march upon Petersburg. While bridges were building, the Federal forces were scattered over the plantation; and when at last they crossed the river, they left devastation behind.

As we came upon the outbuildings of the upper plantation, we heard singing and laughter. Corn-husking was going on in the big barn. The doors were open, and from the distant roadway we could see the negroes at work, bits of their parti-coloured garb showing bright against the dark interior.

And at last, truly enough, our pathway led among the chickens and the geese. Indeed, one blustering gander " quite thought to

bar our way." But, taking courage from the stirring old couplet,

> "We routed him: we scouted him,
> Nor lost a single man."

There were other fowl in sight too; fowl that had a special significance just then. For, despite the bright, warm days, the last Thursday in November was near at hand; and we wondered whether our Thanksgiving dinner could be found in this flock of plump, bronze birds.

The early plantation house at Upper Weyanoke was long ago destroyed by fire, and a modern house of brick now stands upon the old site. A broad, shaded lawn slopes to the river. Here one gets an impressive view of the James as it broadens into a curving bay below Windmill Point.

When we entered the home, our interest centred in its mistress, the little lady of old-time grace and courtesy sitting by the open fire. It was later that we noticed the two portraits hanging near her — one of Chief-Justice Marshall and one of a beautiful dark-eyed young woman.

The relationship of these three — Mrs. Douthat, the Chief-Justice, and the beautiful

young woman — added to the charm of our talk. For the great John Marshall had a son John who married Elizabeth Alexander, a descendant of the colonial house of Thomas; and that Elizabeth Alexander was the girl in the picture. John and Elizabeth had a daughter, and that daughter was the sweet little lady sitting there beneath the portraits. Her grandfather, the Chief-Justice, named her Mary Willis in memory of his cherished, invalid wife.

This Mary Willis Marshall married Fielding Lewis Douthat, of the Harwood family, and went as a bride to Lower Weyanoke when the home there yet spoke bravely of colonial dignity, and the garden was still fragrant with trim bordered beds of bloom. Some years later, they moved to Upper Weyanoke where Mr. Douthat died. In the family circle as we found it were Mrs. Douthat, three daughters, and two sons.

While the conversation ranged wide, from seventeenth century plantation grants to twentieth century houseboats, we found our attention drawn most to the reminiscences of Mrs. Douthat, told in the charming speech of a day that had time for the art of conversation. She had childhood recollections of the great Chief-Justice, and had treasured the

AN ANCESTRESS OF WEYANOKE.

CHIEF-JUSTICE JOHN MARSHALL.

family traditions concerning him. We got all too little both of the personal recollections and of the traditions; but they made it seem a very real John Marshall that this granddaughter of his was talking about.

Mrs. Douthat could not add much to the little that we already knew about a small brick building on the plantation that has long been pointed out from the steamers' decks as one of the oldest buildings in the country. It stands on the river bluff near the present home. If as old as is usually supposed, it is doubtless one of the early garrison houses, and must have seen desperate days on this Indian-harassed peninsula.

In this house, up to the time of her death a few years ago, lived the old mammy of the family. She was one of the last of a type developed through generations of plantation life, and now disappearing with it. Her place was at the end of a long line of dusky nurses, the first of whom landed nearly three centuries ago at James Towne, and crooned to the children of the royal governors the weird minor lullabies of jungle-land.

At present, Elias, a gray-haired negro, lives in the little old house. Every morning he goes to see Mrs. Douthat; and he seldom varies the greeting: "How is you dis

mawnin', Miss Mary? I sut'n'y is glad to see you able to be up an' 'roun'. You know you an' me is chil'en of de same day."

Weyanoke, like most of the large plantations on the James, has a postoffice in the house. Our visit over, we gathered up quite a promising lot of mail and started homeward with the Commodore looking like a peripatetic branch of the rural free delivery. Evening was gathering in as we walked back along the field roads. The air was warm, a gentle breeze went rustling through the corn, and the autumn haze just veiled field and marsh and distant woods.

Upon reaching our shore-boat, we pushed out upon the marsh waterway. In our absence the tide had been slowly creeping up on reeds and rushes, had reached its height, and (leaving a brown, bubbly line upon each slender stalk to show that the law had been fulfilled) had started slowly down again.

But the ebb had only begun. The marsh was yet almost tide-full, and all its channels were water-lanes. Each little way was like every other, and one could well wander amiss down between those winding walls of sedges.

We paddled very slowly, often stopping to let the boat drift on the ebb tide. Why might we not find out the secret of the marshes if

we went very softly through the heart of them? — that secret of which the slender reeds are always whispering; that mystery that keeps them always a-shiver. Is it something they have hidden from the searching tide? Is it known to the little marsh-hen that cunningly builds her nest at the foot of the sedges? Is it guessed by the restless finny folk that slip and search beneath the brown waters?

Holding our boat quiet in the ebbing bayou, we looked and listened. There were sounds of sibilant dripping in the dim sedges; of alewives jumping by the side of our boat; of a sudden rush of blackbird wings; and of the evening breeze as it freshened in the bending blades. We could see the many rivulets, wine-red now in the sunset light; and the graceful swaying of great grasses, pale green and silver and tan; and the red and golden sky above: ebbing rivulets, rippling reeds, drifting clouds, and sunset shades. And that was all. Nor had we guessed the secret of the marshes.

Yet, we should have been content still to look and to listen, down in the hidden tiny ways of the marshland, but for the fading light that warned us homeward. What would night be among the sedges with the wandering rivulets full of twinkling stars, with the

soft calling of wakeful birds, and with the skurrying of little creatures in their shadowy forest of reeds?

Slowly we paddled on in the twilight; on through the little water-gate and out upon the Kittewan, where images of the bordering trees lay sharp and black on the strangely purple water. From down-stream where Gadabout waited, came such a fervent burst of song that we knew that the entire crew was urging its soul to be on guard —

"Te-en thou-san' foes ah-rise."

CHAPTER XVII

ACROSS RIVER TO FLEUR DE HUNDRED

THE next day we determined to run around to the river front of Weyanoke. We were yet charmed with the idea of being back-door neighbours of the old plantation; but not at quite such long range. When the tide served, Gadabout dropped down the twisting Kittewan. Though she paused involuntarily in trying to round the island where the sweet gum flamed against the pines, and caught her propeller on a cypress stump as she sighted the dormer windows of the old house on the hill, yet she came in good time to the clear channel and, passing the tangled underwood that hid the forsaken tomb, she reached the mouth of the creek before the tide turned and started up the James on the last of the flood.

Weyanoke plantation is a peninsula lying in a sharp elbow of the river, so that it was a run of a few miles from the mouth of Kitte-

wan Creek, on one side of the peninsula, around to the Weyanoke pier on the other side.

Upon reaching the sharp bend in the river at the point of the peninsula, we could see one reason anyway why Grant should have chosen this as a place for crossing the James. Here, the banks of the river suddenly draw close so that the stream is less than half a mile wide. However, it makes up in depth what it has lost in width, the channel at this point being from eighty to ninety feet deep. Even at the last of the tide the water here flowed swiftly and with ugly swirls and oily whirlpools that made the river seem vicious.

Now, we ran toward the southern shore to look at the ruins of a fort built in the War of 1812. The sun was setting beyond the high bluff that backed the fort, and the place lay blurred in the shadow; but apparently time, and perhaps the hard knocks of war, had not left much of Fort Powhatan. Two creeks that enter the James near the old fort received our close scrutiny, for every side stream tempted us. We would wonder how far Gadabout could follow each winding way, and what she might find up there.

A short run farther up the river took us abreast the pier at Upper Weyanoke; and,

UPPER WEYANOKE.

AT ANCHOR OFF WEYANOKE.

passing around it, we cast anchor within a stone's throw of the plantation home.

We sat out in the cockpit a long time that night enjoying the strangely quiet mood of the Powhatan. The old river flowed so peacefully that it mirrored all the sky above; and we looked down into a maze of stars with the sea-tide running through. Then a blinding light put out all our stars as the night boat from Richmond came down the river and trained her searchlight so that it picked Gadabout out of the darkness. Our whistle saluted with three good blasts. The searchlight responded by making three profound bows — so profound that they reached from the high heavens down to the water at our feet. Then, it suddenly whipped to the front to pick out the steamer's course again through the darkness of the night.

While lying at anchor in front of Upper Weyanoke, we made further visits at the plantation home. Despite the ravages of war and of two destructive fires, relics of old-time life are at this plantation too. It was pitiful, but amusing as well, to hear how some of these escaped the war-time vandalism. The soldiers who had stripped the home — even of carpets — when they left the plantation to cross the James, would have been chagrined

could they have looked back over the river and have seen old family treasures coming out from secret nooks and old family silver from a hollow tree.

Mrs. Douthat told us how Nature favoured Grant in the crossing of the James. Though comparatively the river is so narrow at the point of the Weyanoke peninsula, yet to get to the stream at that point it was necessary for the Federal forces to traverse an extensive swamp. Apparently the swamp was impassable; but the officers found, running through it, a most peculiar formation — a natural ridge of solid earth. It was a ready-made military roadway upon which the troops could pass through the swamp and reach the river. Mr. Douthat always declared that "The Almighty had built it for them."

Across the James from Weyanoke lies Fleur de Hundred. One day, with a daughter and a son of the Weyanoke household aboard, we sailed over to visit the old plantation. We knew that we should find nothing in the way of plantation life there, as the estate has long lain idle; and we knew also that no mark was left on the broad acres to tell of the life of colonial days. But the broad acres themselves were there, and they would remember the old times no doubt; and

perhaps, lying in the sunshine and with nothing in the world to do, they might tell us things.

We knew somewhat about Fleur de Hundred ourselves. In 1618 Sir George Yeardley, governor of the colony (the same who owned Weyanoke), patented these lands and gave them the name that has scarcely been spelled twice alike since. Sir George sold the plantation to Captain Abraham Piersey.

We sought to trace the successive owners on beyond Abraham; but they married and died at such a rate that we got lost in the confusion somewhere between the altar and the tomb, and gave the matter up. Two well established customs among the early colonists seem to have been to die early and to marry often. Perhaps they usually reversed the order; but, at any rate, dying in middle age after having married "thirdly" or "fifthly" — yes, even "sixthly" — makes top-heavy family trees and puzzling lines of descent.

In this instance, we were quite content to skip to the opening of the nineteenth century when Fleur de Hundred became the property of John V. Willcox, in whose descendants it has ever since remained.

Landing upon a pebbly beach beside the ruins of a pier, we took a long walk inland

to the present-day home. While historic Fleur de Hundred is now allowed to lie idle, its plantation life all gone, yet its home life continues and the old-time hospitality remains, as we found in that afternoon visit. And when we set our faces toward Gadabout again, Nautica had roses and lavender and violets from an old garden that refused to stop blooming with the rest of the plantation, and the Commodore treasured a rare pamphlet upon early Virginia that only Virginia courtesy would have entrusted to a stranger.

Through the quiet of the sleeping plantation, we took our way toward the river. Some bees had found late sweetness along the overgrown roadway. The air was still and sweet with the scent of sun-drying herbs. A lagging sail was on old Powhatan. About us on every hand lay the historic soil of Fleur de Hundred. We wondered where the manor-house had stood in those early colonial days when Sir George Yeardley, the governor, made his home here, with many indented servants and half the negroes in the colony to serve him; and where had been the several dwellings and store-houses, stoutly palisaded, that had formed quite a village for his day.

PRESENT - DAY FLEUR DE HUNDRED.

It is not recorded that the Governor was a great smoker, but he was an enthusiastic grower of tobacco and may almost be said to have been the father of the industry. Doubtless, in his time, most of these fertile acres were covered with the strange weed that the Englishmen had got from the village gardens of the red man.

But here were grown maize and wheat also; and to grind these Sir George built — over there on the point of the plantation — the first windmill in America.

In the eyes of the savages, he must have waxed to the stature of a great medicine man, when he made of wood the long arms that beckoned to the winds and made them come to grind his grain. Through all time, had not their fathers (or rather their mothers) had to steep grain for twelve hours; then laboriously pound it in stone mortars; and then sift it through baskets woven of river reeds?

Less matter for wonderment was that long-armed creature on the point of land to Hans Houten and Heinrich Elkens, sailing up the James in the White Dove with good Holland sack for barter. These sturdy mariners from the dyke-and-windmill country would regard the contrivance with more critical eyes than

could the red man from the bow-and-arrow wilderness.

But we saw nothing of windmill or of palisaded village or of royal governor; and field and meadow and woodland all seemed too sleepy to tell us much about them. They only served to recall the tantalizing, broken bits that the records give of the picturesque life that was here — of colonial pomp and savage dignity, of London trade and Indian barter, of English games and merriment, of colonial trials and tragedies: all this of which we know, yet know so little.

And so we left the old plantation dreaming in the autumn sunshine — left it to the poets and to the story-tellers, who seem to have adopted it. They know how to weave the spells that bring back old manor-houses and gallants and ladies and tall London ships and the vanished scenes of love and of war. The place belongs to them; old Fleur de Hundred — half real and half ideal — an old-time bit of story-land.

CHAPTER XVIII

GADABOUT GOES TO CHURCH

It was the day before Thanksgiving when the houseboat Gadabout, with her good-byes all said, fished up her anchor from the river bottom in front of Weyanoke, and started off to find another place to drop it farther up the stream. She was ready for the holiday. The material for her Thanksgiving dinner was all aboard: part of it canned and boxed as the steamer had just brought it from Norfolk; and the rest of it, and the best of it, plump and gobbling on the stern.

But Gadabout's preparations for the day had not stopped here. Not only had she provided the season's feast, but she had diligently inquired of her chart and of her neighbours where she might take her family to church. The chart had told her of a little stream, called Herring Creek, a few miles farther up the James, and had shown her a mark upon the bank of the creek that it called Westover Church. The neighbours had said

that the chart was right; and had added that the church was a colonial one still in use, and doubtless Thanksgiving services would be held there. Fortunately, Herring Creek was a stream that Gadabout had intended running into anyway, as it would be the anchorage most convenient to the next colonial estate that she should visit — the plantation of Westover from which the church had taken its name.

From Weyanoke to the old church was not very far; but, as Gadabout had one or two things to stop for on the way and as she might be delayed by the tide, this bright Wednesday morning found her bustling up the river almost afraid that she would be late for service.

Doubtless, in her haste, she was quite put out when we threw the wheel to starboard as she was passing Court House Creek, and carried her somewhat out of her way. All that we did it for was to run in close to look at some "stobs" just showing above the water. At the mouths of most of the creeks along the James are such "stobs" or broken pilings. They are the ruins of old-time piers, the last vestige of a vanished, picturesque river trade.

Ancient pilings have lasted well in the

James; and these evidently once belonged to the piers of up-creek colonial planters. They tell of the day when ships from England, Holland, and the Indies sailed up the river for barter with the colonists. While the planters whose estates fronted directly on the James received their importations upon wharves before their doors and delivered their tobacco in the same convenient manner, the planters up the creeks were at more trouble in the matter. The bars at the mouths of the streams kept the ships from entering; and they had to wait outside while the planters brought their produce down upon rafts and in shallow-draft barges, pirogues, and shallops.

Some of the most picturesque of the colonial river trade was at these little creek-mouth piers. Here came not only the tall ships from England bearing everything used upon the plantations from match-locks and armour to satin bodice and perfumed periwig, from plow and spit to Turkey-worked chairs and silver plate, from oatmeal, cheese, and wine to nutmegs and Shakespeare's plays; but here came also tramp craft — broad, deep-laden bottoms from the Netherlands, and English and Dutch boats from the West Indies. These picturesque vagrant sails

sought their customers from landing to landing, and sold their cargoes at comparatively low prices. Such a ship was a sort of bargain boat for these scattered settlers up the creeks of the James; a queer, transient department store at the little cross-roads of tidewater.

There would be exchange of news as well as of commodities, and a friendly rivalry in the matter of tales of adventure — the planter's story of Indian attacks being pitted against the captain's yarn of the "pyrats" that gave him chase off the "Isle of Devils." Then up the masts of the trading ship the sails would go clacking, and the prow that had touched the warm wharves of the Indies would point up the river again, bound for the next landing. And the shallops of the planter — after loading from the little pier with casks and bales still strong of the ship's hold, of the tar of the ropes, of the salt of the sea — would disappear up the forest stream.

A short distance above Court House Creek, Gadabout stopped at a landing to get some oil. She was rather hurried and flustered about the matter, as the steamer from Petersburg was coming around the point above and would soon be making this same landing, and

a schooner that was loading was right in the way, and the first line that was thrown out broke, and the engine stopped at the wrong time, and — all those people looking on! Besides, this was supposed to be an interesting fishing point; but how was a little houseboat to get a look at it, lying there alongside a big schooner that she couldn't see over? Altogether, Gadabout fumed and fussed so much here, pitching about in the choppy water, jerking her ropes, and battering her big neighbour, that it was a relief to all concerned when she got her oil aboard, cast off her ropes, and, giving the schooner a last vindictive dig in the ribs, set off up the river.

Even after getting away from the schooner there was not much to be seen at the landing. Yet, in season, the little place would be quite quaint and bustling; for it was one of the many fishing hamlets along the river.

The James has always been a favourite spawning-ground for sturgeon. Those first colonists, writing enthusiastically of the newfound river, declared "As for Sturgeon, all the World cannot be compared to it." They told of a unique and spirited way the Indians had of catching these huge, lubberly fish. In a narrow bend of the river where the sturgeon crowded, an adroit fisherman would clap a

noose over the tail of a great fish (a fish perhaps much larger than himself) and go plunging about with his powerful captive. And he was accounted "cockarouse," brave fellow, who kept his hold, diving and swimming, and finally towed his catch ashore.

The colonists early turned their attention to sturgeon fishing. The roe they prepared and shipped abroad for the Russians' piquant table delicacy. The grim irony of it — half famished colonists shipping caviar!

To-day the coming of the sturgeon puts life into the little hamlets like the one we had just passed, and dots their sandy beaches with the bateaux and the drying nets of the fishermen.

We passed the down-bound steamer near Buckler's Point and her heavy swell came rolling across toward us. Almost instinctively we turned our craft crosswise to the river to face the coming waves; for to take them broadside meant a weary picking up of fragments from the cabin floors, and a premature commingling of the contents of the refrigerator. Just beyond Buckler's Point we came to the opening into Herring Creek and, passing readily over the bar, went on up the little stream. As we sailed along we caught glimpses to port of the warm, red

A FISHING HAMLET.

A RIVER LANDING.

walls of a stately building that we knew to be Westover.

We found Herring Creek a good, lazy houseboating waterway; a brown ribbon of marsh stream wandering aimlessly among the rushes. Turn after turn, and the marshes still kept us company — the quiet, lone marshes that had come to have such a charm for us. Evidently, they were beginning to feel that the year was growing old. Greens were sobering into browns, and near the water's edge were tips of silvery white. The frowsy-looking grassy bunches, here and there, were ducking blinds, where hunters soon would be in hiding with their wooden decoys floating near.

Like some great marsh creature herself, Gadabout followed the winding way, puffing along contentedly. Sometimes, when the turns were too sharp for her liking, she swung to them lazily, with a long purr of water at bow and stern, and seemed about to wallow off through the rushes.

Now something of a bank developed along our starboard side. It grew into a bluff covered with pines and thick-coated cedars and white-trunked sycamores and gray beeches. This woodland too had the year writ old. The surviving green of cedar and pine could

not hide the telltale leafless trees that stood between. But more significant than leafless trees was the luxuriant holly with its ripe, red berries, gayly ready for Christmas decorations and to grace the birth of a new year.

And yet, these were among the most glorious days for houseboating: tonic days with a hint of winter in the chill, crisp air, and dreamy days with a lingering of summer in the sun's warm glow. The enervating heat was over, and the worrisome insects were gone. In peace we could sail in the marsh stream or climb the banks for ferns and holly. Gadabout moved with masses of pale reeds, spicy boughs of cedar, bay branches, and glowing holly nodding on her bow. The air was no longer filled with the song of birds; but it was alive and cheerily a-twitter with their fat flittings from seeds to berries, from marsh to woodland. Heartily we declared that it was better to go an-Autumning than a-Maying.

After a while there were signs of people about. Little boats were nosing into the bank here and there, and occasionally a white farmhouse would peep over the bluff above our water-trail.

It was along toward dinner time when, according to our count, the houseboat had

"LITTLE BOATS WERE NOSING INTO THE BANK HERE AND THERE."

rounded as many bends as the chart seemed to require, and ought to be near Westover Church. So, upon catching sight through the trees of a brick building up on the bluff, we concluded that Gadabout had reached her journey's end, and an anchor was dropped.

Toward evening Nautica and the Commodore went ashore. At the top of the hill was a little graveyard, and standing in it was the old church that we had come to see. It was a small building and plain, but of historic interest. As originally built, about the middle of the seventeenth century, it stood not here but down on the shore of the James at Westover. One of the earliest churches in the country, and then standing on one of the greatest estates in Virginia, it was a typical centre of colonial life; and gathered about it, in the little graveyard by the river, were the tombs of noted colonial dead.

About the middle of the eighteenth century the church was moved to its present site. Enclosed within a brick wall and with the tombs of generations of worshippers again clustering about it, Westover Church had settled down once more to revered old age when the ravages of war swept over the land. In that sad war of brothers over a union that this church had seen formed, over soil that it had

seen won from Great Britain, the humble old House of God was left dismantled, its graveyard walls thrown down, and its tombs broken. After the war, the church was repaired, and it is still the place of worship for the countryside.

The rectory stood on a bluff near by, overlooking the wide stretch of marsh and the far windings of the stream. We found that the latest of the long line of rectors and equally important rectors' wives that Westover Church has known were the Reverend and Mrs. Cornick, who told us of the hopes of the little community that the Government would yet pay indemnity for the injury done by Federal soldiers to the old church.

The next morning brought so fine a Thanksgiving Day that our gratitude rose up with the sun — though the rest of us awaited a more convenient hour. The air was crisp; the sky was unclouded. When, in good time for morning service, we went up the hill to the old brick church, we saw horses and carriages lined along the fence. Inside the building some of the people who had come early were having neighbourly confidences over the backs of the pews.

Naturally our thoughts went wandering between service and sermon and church.

Sometimes (and through no fault of the good rector either), we would find ourselves far back in the story of that colonial house of worship, and full two hundred years away from the text. We would see this old church as it stood at first on the wild bank of the James, and the families of those early planters gathering in. They would come from up and down the river; some in pirogues and pinnaces and sloops, and some on horseback with the fair dames on pillions behind. Or, somewhat later, lordly coaches would roll to the door bearing colonial grandees.

The plain little church had seen brave attire in those days, when the parish worshipped in flowered silks and embroidered waistcoats and laced head-dresses and powdered periwigs. Then, after the services, would come the social hour, when dinner invitations went round, parties were planned, and there was a general changing about of the guests that were always filling Virginia homes. Doubtless, the lavish hospitality of the master of Westover, who attended this church, caused quite a Sunday pilgrimage to that mansion of his that we had glimpsed through the trees as Gadabout entered Herring Creek.

We went out past chatting groups (stopping for the greeting of the rector and his

wife); past horses that were being unhitched and vehicles that were cramping and creaking; on down to the stream where geese were paddling in the marshes, and overhead the rectory doves were wheeling in the sunny air. Rowing down the creek toward the houseboat, we stopped here and there to gather reeds and holly.

"This is the first time that we have ever gone to church by boat," said the Commodore.

"Yes," answered Nautica, "and it was just the way to do it. We have attended a colonial church in a quite colonial way."

When we sat down to our Thanksgiving dinner, we felt almost like landlubbers again; for while our home acre was a watery one and Gadabout, boat-like, swung and swayed, yet we had real neighbours up on the bluff and there was even a church next door. Later, we saw coming down the stream some good after-dinner cheer — our rowboat with mail that had been accumulating for days at Westover. Letters and papers and packages and magazines were welcomed aboard. Comfortably we settled down for an evening of catching up with the world.

Next morning Gadabout made an uneventful run down the stream, anchored just within

the mouth of the creek, and sent Henry off into the country foraging.

Of course certain provisioning arrangements followed Gadabout from harbour to harbour. Boxes of groceries came up from Norfolk or down from Richmond by steamer; and also every few days a big cake of ice arrived in a travelling suit of burlap lined with sawdust. But that still left many things to be obtained along the way. As most of the country stores were back from the river, the sailor, on horseback or in a cart, made many a long provisioning trip.

Toward evening when there came a gentle bump upon Gadabout's guard and the rattle of a chain upon her cleat, we went out to see what the supply boat had brought. As soon as we heard the troubled sputtering, "An' I mos' give up gittin' anything," we knew that the little shore-boat was a nautical horn of plenty. And so she proved as her cargo came aboard to an accompaniment of running comment.

"I don' know *where* I been, an' if I had to go back, I couldn' do it. That's butter there — that'll do till the nex' box comes. The store didn' have much of anything; an' I struck out into the country, I did, an' mos' los' myse'f. But the horse he knowed the

way. I got another turkey, anyhow. I'm cert'nly glad we jes' begun to eat 'em if we got to eat 'em steady. The man had done sold him; but I used my silver tongue, I did, an' he let me have him. There's some apples an' turnips an' sweet potatoes. I got them at the store. An' where I got them eggs at, I could get a couple of chickens nex' week if I could jes' fin' the place."

So the fruits of the foraging came tumbling aboard — a promising, goodly array. And Gadabout had no troubled dreams that night of a wolf swimming up to her door.

CHAPTER XIX

WESTOVER, THE HOME OF A COLONIAL BELLE

On the following day, Gadabout scrambled across the flats out into the James again, intent upon a visit to Westover.

Unlike Brandon, Westover stands within sight from the river; and we had a good view of the old homestead as we passed by to make our landing at the steamer pier which is a little above the house.

There was a break in the tree-fringe on the north bank of the James. A sea-wall extended along the water's edge, and from either end of it a brick wall ran far inland. Within the spacious enclosure, the grounds swept back and up from the river, with noble trees and close-cut lawn; and crowning the slope stood the beautiful old mansion. A stately central building of red brick, with dormer windows in its steep-pitched roof, rose between low flanking corridors and wings like some overlord with his faithful vassals in attendance. In neutral brown the quiet

river, in shadowy green the sloping lawn, in dull red and gleaming white the lofty, many-windowed front of Westover — a picture that drew Gadabout in close to the shoals that day.

The bit of history that goes with the picture gives us many glimpses of old-time elegance and romance, and helps us to a good idea of some of the pretentious phases of colonial life. It runs in this way.

Back in the beginnings of things American, when the dissatisfied planters at James Towne were starting out to establish their estates along the river, these lands by Herring Creek attracted attention. Under the name of Westover they soon became the property of the Byrd family, and rose to prominence among colonial estates in connection with the fortunes of that distinguished house.

The golden age of Westover was in the days of the second William Byrd, who was one of the most striking figures of colonial times. Handsome, learned, witty, and capable; with exquisite taste and elegant culture fashioned in the friendship of English noblemen; with almost endless acres and boundless wealth — a cavalier of cavaliers was this London-bred Virginian.

RIVERWARD FRONT OF WESTOVER.

It is surprising that this *beau-ideal* should have remained spouseless for two years after coming into his estate. He must have been considered the most fascinating matrimonial possibility in the colony. One can imagine how in a gathering of Virginia maidens intent upon their tambour embroidery, when the name of Westover's young master came up, a circle of eyelashes went down and a circle of tender hearts went both up and down. The prize was finally won by Lucy Parke, daughter of Colonel Daniel Parke whose portrait hangs at Brandon.

Some years later, family litigation called Colonel Byrd to England, where his wife and little daughter, Evelyn, joined him, and where his wife soon died. The residence in London continued for a number of years; and resulted in giving the Colonel a new wife in the person of a rich young widow, and in giving social finish and a broken heart to Evelyn Byrd.

Under the guidance of her father, she was educated after the manner of the fashionable life of that day. It must have been a time quite to the elegant Colonel's liking when London turned in admiration to his daughter; when, but sixteen and already crowned with social successes, the cultured beauty from

the plantation on the James was presented at the English Court.

The stories of Evelyn Byrd's London experiences bring many noted names into the train of those who did her honour: the Lords Chesterfield and Oxford, and Pope at the height of his glory, and the cynical Lord Hervey, and Beau Nash, the autocrat of Bath. There should be mentioned too that old courtier (whoever he was) whose admiration was expressed in the rather mild witticism, "I no longer wonder that young men are anxious to go to Virginia to study ornithology, since such beautiful *birds* are to be found there."

It was in the midst of this London gayety that Evelyn Byrd so literally met her fate in meeting the grandson of Lord Peterborough, Charles Mordaunt. The story of that unhappy love affair — the devoted pair, the opposition of the maiden's father, and the separation of the lovers — has become an oft-told but ever attractive romance.

About 1726, Colonel Byrd returned with his family to Virginia; and it was then, it seems, that he built the present mansion at Westover, and entered upon the almost sumptuous life there that was to make the plantation famous.

And Westover was a worthy setting for the worthy Colonel. Without the home, were lawns and gardens beautiful with native and imported trees, shrubs, and vines; and within the home, spacious rooms with rich furnishings and art treasures gathered in England and on the Continent. Here too was one of the largest and most valuable collections of books in the colonies. As a matter of course, this home was a distinguished social centre, drawing to itself the most brilliant colonial society.

Colonel Byrd died in 1744, and was buried in the old garden when it was in all its summer glory. In the next generation, Westover passed to strangers, having been for a century and a quarter the home of the Byrds, who for three successive generations had held proud position in colonial America.

Since then, the plantation has suffered from many changes of ownership, and from the Civil War. The mansion was held several times by the Federal forces, being used as headquarters and as an army storehouse. Among the war injuries it sustained was the destruction of one wing. The destroyed portion has been rebuilt recently by the present owner of the estate, Mrs. C. Sears Ramsay. Under her ownership, Westover has had

added interest, especially for lovers of the colonial, on account of such extensive restoration as has made the old home one of the finest examples of eighteenth century architecture and furnishing in America.

Surely while we have been telling the story of Westover, Gadabout has had time to reach the steamboat pier above the house; and we may take it that she is safely tied to the pilings.

Once ashore, Nautica and the Commodore found that a short walk along the river bluff brought them to an entrance to the Westover grounds. Gates of wrought iron, with perhaps a martlet from the Byrd coat of arms above them, swung between tall pillars in the wall. From this entrance, a pathway approached the homestead diagonally, and afforded charming views of the house and its surroundings. To our right as we walked, the lawn, thick set with trees, sloped gently to the river wall. To our left, the views came in broken, picturesque bits; a stretch of shrubbery, a reach of garden wall, some quaint outbuildings in warm, dull red, a glimpse of courtyard beyond a corner of box, and then the old home itself.

The riverward portal of Westover stands tall, white, and finely typical of its day.

THE HALL, WITH ITS CARVED MAHOGANY STAIRCASE.

Above squared stone steps, the double doors with the fanlight above them are framed by two engaged columns supporting an elaborate pediment that has the symbolic pineapple in the centre.

We stood before the fine entrance, fancy painting the old-time scene within; that scene of eighteenth century elegance which is the traditional picture of colonial Westover. The door opened, and we entered upon perhaps quite as charming an eighteenth century scene, which is the Westover of to-day.

A panelled hall extended through the house, the double doors at the farther end opening upon a glass-enclosed vestibule. About midway, and from beneath a heavy crystal chandelier, the stairway of carved mahogany rose to a landing, where an ancient clock stood tall and dark, then turned and wound to the rooms above.

To the right of the hall was the drawing-room. Passing over its threshold, we thought of those old colonial days, the days of Colonel Byrd. As in his time, the light came subdued through the deep-casemented windows. It fell upon the walls that he had so handsomely panelled, upon the ceiling that he had ornamented in the delicate putty-work of his day, and upon furniture in carved mahogany

that was of the period of his ownership of Westover.

At the farther end of the room was the noted mantelpiece imported from Italy by Colonel Byrd. It is an elaborate creation of Italian marble with relief design in white upon a black background. In front of it, on either hand, stood handsome brass torchères, with their suggestion of the mellow candle-light that was wont to fall in this same room upon the courtly Colonel, the lovely Evelyn, and those brilliant assemblages of colonial times.

Opening also from the hall are the dining-room with its high colonial mantel and typical Virginia buffet, the French morning-room with its gray green tints and its touches of gilt, and the library with its old chimney-piece, high black fire-dogs, and quaint fire-tending irons. All the rooms have their colonial panelling, deep window-seats, and open fireplaces.

In the dining-room our interest was quickened upon our being told that the handsome sideboard had belonged to the Byrd family. It is believed to be a Hepplewhite, though similar in lines to a rare design of Sheraton's. Above the sideboard a circular, concave mirror of elaborate eighteenth century type

THE HEPPLEWHITE SIDEBOARD WITH BUTLER'S DESK.

"FOUR-POSTERS AND THE THINGS OF FOUR-POSTER DAYS."

accentuates the period furnishing of the room.

Up-stairs even more than below, we felt the atmosphere of the olden time. Perhaps passing the ancient clock on the landing helped to set us back a century or two. We were quite prepared for the quiet, old-fashioned upper hall, with its richness half lost in the shadows and with its sleepy night-stand holding a brass house lantern and a prim array of candles in brass candlesticks.

In the bedrooms were four-posters and the things of four-poster days. Wing-cheek chairs of cozy depths told of old-time fireside dreams; a work-table with attenuated legs called to mind the wearisome needlework of our foremothers; and a brass warming-pan carried us back to the times when only such devices could make tolerable the frigid winter beds of our ancestors.

One of the riverward bedrooms is the romantic centre of Westover. It now belongs to the little daughter of the house; but nearly two centuries ago it was the room of Evelyn Byrd. Doubtless, in a sense, it will always be hers. The soft toned panelled walls, the old fireplace opposite the door, and the cozy little dressing-room looking gardenward, all seem to speak of her; and the imaginative

visitor can quite discern a graceful figure in colonial gown there in one of the deep window seats that look out upon the pleasance and the river.

Here the unfortunate colonial beauty lived and died with the grief that she brought from over the sea. Here she laid away the rich brocade, the old court gown of brilliant, bitter memories that was shown to us at Brandon. Through these windows she looked with ever more wistful eyes out upon the river, her thoughts hurrying with its waters toward the ocean and the lover beyond. And one day, it is said, a great ship from London came, and it touched at the pier before her windows, and Charles Mordaunt plead his cause with the stern father once more. But he plead in vain, and the ship and the lover sailed away. For a while longer, the colonial girl waited and looked out upon the river, then she too went away and the romance was over.

In the family circle at Westover to-day are Mrs. Ramsay, two sons, and the little daughter, Elizabeth. Among well-known families appearing in Mrs. Ramsay's ancestry are the Sears and the Gardiners of Massachusetts, she being a descendant of Lyon Gardiner of Gardiner's Island. She also claims kinship with the Randolphs and the Reeveses

THE ROMANTIC CENTRE OF WESTOVER; EVELYN BYRD'S OLD ROOM.

of Virginia, and a collateral and remote connection with the Byrds.

When we returned to the steamer pier after our visit at Westover, we found quite a wind on the river and the houseboat fretfully bumping the pilings. We hastened aboard, ran down stream before a stiff wind, and skurried back into our harbour in Herring Creek, where Gadabout settled to her moorings as contented as a duck in the marshes.

CHAPTER XX

AN OLD COURTYARD AND A SUN-DIAL

For some time that little anchorage was our watery home acre. We came to call it our sunrise harbour. The opening where creek and river met faced to the east; and it was well worth while, if the morning was not too chill, to have an eye on that opening when the sun came up. Breaking through the mist veil that hung over the James, he cast a golden pontoon across the river, and then came over in all his splendour. He made straight for the mouth of our little creek, flooding wood and marsh with misty glow, and fairly crowding his glory into the narrow channel.

One morning, quite in keeping with the splendid burst of dawn, a loud report rang out over the marshes like the sound of a sunrise gun. But it was no salute to the orb of day. Somebody was poaching. More shots followed; and ducks, quacking loudly, fluttered up out of the marshes. Later, when we were at breakfast, a long rowboat, con-

taining a man and a pile of brush and doubtless some ducks with the fine flavour of the forbidden, came out from a break in the marshes and went hurriedly up the stream.

As we lay in our harbour, we found ourselves almost unconsciously listening for a sound that seemed to belong to those chill, gray days. At last, from somewhere high up in the air, it came ringing down to us — the stirring "honk, honk" of the wild goose. Though our eyes searched the heavens, we could see nothing of the living wedge of flight up there that was cleaving its way southward with the speed of the wind. But we felt the thrill of that wild, stirring cry and were satisfied.

Whether the geese brought it or not, bad weather came with them. Half a gale came driving the rain before it down the river. Gadabout lay with her bulkheads closed tight about her forward cockpit, and must have looked most dismal. But inside, dry and warm, she was a very cheery little craft. We listened quite contentedly to the uproar, looking out from our windows upon wind-swept marsh and scudding clouds and the fussy little wavelets of our harbour. It added to our sense of coziness to look through a stern window out upon the river where the

waters piled and broke white, in their midst an anchored schooner with swaying masts, tipsy between wind and tide.

One day when the heavens had gone blue again, though tattered clouds were still racing across, we hoisted anchor for another visit to Westover. When Gadabout poked her head out of the creek, she saw a queer looking craft busy on the James. It was a government buoy-tender, an awkward side-wheeler with a derrick forward, and big red sticks and black ones lying on deck.

As we passed the tender, it was moving the red buoy at the mouth of our creek farther out into the river. Evidently the shoals were encroaching upon the channel. Gadabout showed little interest in the strange boat and its doings; and, unconcernedly turning her back, headed up the river. Of course buoys were all very well and she found them quite a help in getting about; but all this fussy shifting of them by a few feet mattered little to her, for she was on the wrong side of them most of the time anyway.

However, we thought of how differently the watchful buoy-tender would be regarded by the heavy laden freighters that would pass that way, their rusty hulls plowing deep. To them how important that each buoy, each

inanimate flagman of the river route, should stand true where danger lies and truly point the fairway.

Reaching the little cove below the steamboat pier, Gadabout ran close in and cast anchor. She may well have been proud of the quite perceptible waves that she sent rolling to the shore and of the quite audible swish that they made on the beach.

That morning we saw the landward front of Westover, and straightway forgot all about the more pretentious river front. You step from the house down into an old-time courtyard. At first you do not see much of the courtyard itself, for you have heard of its noted entrance gates, perhaps the first example of ornamental iron-work in the colonies, and they stand quite conspicuously in front of you. These gates were imported from England by Colonel William Byrd, whose initials, W. E. B., appear inwrought in monogram.

Two great birds standing on stone balls top the gate-posts. With a fine disregard of both ornithology and heraldry these birds have often been spoken of as martlets — the martlet appearing in the Byrd coat of arms. They are evidently eagles, and pretty well developed specimens. American eagles, we

might call them, if they had not lighted upon these gate-posts before the American nation adopted its emblem — indeed before the American nation was born. When, in the days of the Civil War, the Federal troops came along, the soldiers seem to have stood strictly upon chronology, and to have determined that these fine prerevolutionary birds were not entitled to any immunity as national emblems nor even as kinsfolk of "Old Abe." And so their tough feathers flattened many a bullet, and one eagle had to be sent to Richmond to get some toes and a new tail.

Turning from the gates, your eyes follow down the courtyard toward the garden. Walls, outbuildings, the quaint cellar-hut, even the diamond-shaped stepping-stones along the way, all help to make up a characteristic colonial scene.

And for what striking bits of colonial life has this old courtyard been the setting! Now the exquisite Colonel and his ladies would visit the little capital of Williamsburg; so, at his door, stands ready his "lordly coach and six with liveried outriders in waiting." Again, the great gates are thrown open to guests arriving on horseback and in chariots and chairs. Pompous, beruffled dignitaries vie with gay gallants in obeisances and com-

pliments to the ladies, and in assisting them to alight without harm to brocades and laces and rich cloaks and wide-hooped petticoats. And, yet again, all is a-bustle here with scarlet-coated horsemen and baying hounds and hurrying black boys and all that goes to

"Proclaim a hunting-morning."

When the ancient courtyard is left empty again — the colonial coaches rolled off through the gates; the colonial huntsmen up and away and now but distant points of red, fading to the music of hounds and horns — we fall to wondering about those early Virginians.

Such, largely, was their life — abundant leisure, elegant display, exuberant merry-making. Just such a life, by all the rules, as would produce a useless race devoid of any solidity of mind or of character. Just such a life as in fact produced a race of high-minded, intelligent, and capable men; a race that gave us Washington, Jefferson, Henry, Madison, Marshall, Monroe, and the scarcely lesser names on down the long list of those wonderful sons of the Old Dominion.

It would do no good to ask even that colonial courtyard for an explanation of all this. It simply recalled what it had seen and heard.

Nor could we of to-day understand the explanation were we to get it. Unable to reconcile industry and leisure, we underrate the real work that went with the idling of those early Virginians; and as to the gayety, we long ago lost sight of the fact that merry-making is man-making.

Turning from the gateway, we went down the old courtyard. We followed a walk that led past the kitchen and the dairy, skirted a wall, and then turned through a box-shaded gateway into the garden.

Those December days were not the season of gardens, even in Virginia. The paths led us not where bloom was, but where bloom had been. Yet, truly all times are garden times where warm red walls shut you in with shadowing trees and shrubs, and where ancient box and ivy hedge the prim old ways.

How much our colonial forefathers thought of their gardens! and how much their English forefathers thought of theirs! It was in the blood to have a garden, and to have it walled, and to sit and to walk and to talk in it.

Walking and talking that day with Westover's mistress in Westover's garden, we soon came upon the tomb of the noted William Byrd. Representative as was this master of

THE COLONIAL COURTYARD GATES.

TOMB OF COLONEL WILLIAM BYRD.

Westover of all that was most elegant in the colonial life of his day, he was much more than merely a man of the fashionable world. Ability of a high order went with the beauty and the ruffles and the powder. He was statesman, scholar, and author; and in England he had been made, for his proficiency in science, a fellow of the Royal Society.

We owe a great deal to this old-time grandee for the glimpses his writings give us of colonial life in the South during the generation just preceding that of Washington. Unlike the Northern colonists, the Southern ones left little record of themselves. So much the more valuable, then, the accounts given by this remarkable man of the times.

We seemed turning from an impressive text as we left the tomb; left the old grand seignior in his little six feet of earth — six feet out of 175,000 acres! But, after all, it was a rueful text; not one for morning sunshine and blue sky, for hearts that yet beat strong, that yet gloried in a boundless estate — all the bright world ours. And the birds were holding carnival over by the stone basin under the ram's head on the wall; and the river was dancing in the sunlight; and besides, we had caught sight of a sun-dial there in that old colonial garden by the banks of

the "King's River"! To be sure we were told that this was not an ancient timepiece of the sun. We were much too late to see the original sun-dial of this garden. That old colonial worthy had found time too long for its marking. Worn with the years that it had told, it had leaned and dozed, and lost count, and was gone.

But it is not so much that a garden should have an *old* sun-dial, as that it should have a sun-dial. For the matter of that, they are all old. Venerableness is their birthright. Whoever thinks of youth in a sun-dial? Were you unboxing one just from the maker would you not expect to find it moss-grown?

Indeed, are these timepieces of sun and shadow made at all, or do they just occur here and there like hoary rocks and mossy springs? And what a charming provision of Nature it is that they so often occur in gardens! Sun-dials and gardens! Sunshine-and-shadow time for plants to grow by; sunshine-and-shadow time for flowers to bloom by. Surely this is the only time by which a morning-glory should waken, by which a four-o'clock should know its hour, by which an evening primrose should time its fragrant bloom.

Sun-dials and gardens! Sunshine-and-

shadow time for birds to sing by; sunshine-and-shadow time for mortals to laze and dream by. Beautiful, silent, peaceful time; where no clocks strike the passing hours, no whistles scream the round of toil. What time like that of the noiseless, scarce-moving shadow upon the dial for a sleepy old garden and a day-dreamer in the sunshine? And if, perchance, the garden-lover is not building castles in Spain, but has crept into the garden only for brief rest from the fray, or to give a weary clock-driven soul an hour with its Maker, then truly again — sun-dials and gardens! Sun-dial time to rest the fainting heart by; sun-dial time for the troubled soul to reach up to God by. Sun-dials and gardens!

Be the garden-lover what he may — day-dreamer, fainting heart, troubled soul — how gently the shadow-finger on the dial points the time for him! How softly, almost lingeringly, it lets the moments slip from gold to gray, seeking to give him, to the full and unfretted, his little hour in the sunshine!

And yet, the gentlest marker of time must mark. It may mark very softly those passing moments of life's lessening span; but when we come to look again, the shadow has moved on. Nor can childish interference avail.

Spread your rebellious hands upon the dial; you shall only see the shadow come stealing through your fingers. Stand defiantly in the path of the sunlight, and blot out the telltale dial shadow with your own; it but waits until you step aside, then leaps across the moments you have wasted. Not for you shall the boon to the sick and penitent King of Judah be repeated; not for you shall the shadow turn backward on the sun-dial of Ahaz.

CHAPTER XXI

AN UNDERGROUND MYSTERY AND A DUCKING-STOOL

For a day or two Gadabout lay out in the James in front of Westover. One evening it turned cold and a strong wind set in, coming straight at us across the river. As usual, when Gadabout was anchored on a stormy night near a lee shore, we cast a lead out ahead, so as to be able to tell (after it should become too dark to see the land) whether or not we were dragging anchor.

That is, we called it casting a lead, though in reality the process consisted in throwing out into the river (as far ahead of us as we could) a piece of old iron with a string tied to it. Then, at any time, by gathering up the loose end of the string that lay in the cockpit, one could detect by the outgo of the line any tendency on the part of Gadabout to run away with her anchor. It was a very simple device and not exactly original, having doubtless been used a little earlier by

Christopher Columbus and Noah and those people. But we never permitted any question of priority to dampen our interest in the thing.

As the evening wore on the storm held steadily; steadily and rapidly the barometer kept counting backward; and we took the river's width in wind and sea for half the night. We could not sleep, and sat bolstered up in our chairs. The Commodore quite likely did breathe audibly now and then; but Nautica was wide awake, as shown by her announcing with feeling and frequency that "she knew we were dragging anchor and were just about to be horribly wrecked upon rocks or 'stobs' or something or other."

The Commodore arose and busied himself about cockpit and cabin mysteriously. When he finished his labours, the string from the piece of iron out in the river came into the cabin through a hole in the wall made for an engine bell cord. It ran along the ceiling to the after end of the cabin, where a weight kept it taut. A handkerchief that could be plainly seen even in the dim light, was fastened to the string just where it passed above Nautica's head. By this time, the Commodore's mystery was a mystery no longer; and Nautica was laughing.

"So that is to put an end to all my anxieties, is it?"

"Just so," said the Commodore. "When that anxious feeling comes, watch the handkerchief. If it is moving toward the door, you may know that your fears are better grounded than the anchors; but if it is not, try to get a wink of sleep."

And the wind howled and the boat pitched; but Nautica gazed in such relief at the immovable handkerchief that she fell asleep in her chair. When she wakened with a start and looked anxiously at the handkerchief, it was too late — the storm was over.

In the morning there was nothing to show for all that night's commotion. Smooth, peaceful, and lazy, old Powhatan was loitering in the sunlight to the sea. But Gadabout was not to be soothed into forgetfulness of those night hours. As soon as she had her morning work done up, she hoisted anchor and headed again for her quiet harbour in Herring Creek. After that, when we had a mind to go to Westover, we usually had no mind to take Gadabout with us. Instead, we were more likely to row up the river or to walk up the beach at low tide.

On the occasion of our last visit to the manor-house, we determined to go "beach-

way." We ran our rowboat on a sandy point jutting into the mouth of the creek, and took our way along the narrow strip of solid land that lay between river and marsh. White-limbed sycamores and tangled undergrowth went along with us, and sometimes inclined to take up more than their share of the narrow way. Brilliant berries gleamed on some bare, brown bushes, and the green leaves of the smilax pretended that they grew there too. Along the beach, tall bunches of reeds stood out against the brown of the river and the blue of the sky in their waving slenderness.

Looking backward across the marshes, we could see the white railing on Gadabout's upper deck and could catch the flutter of her flags through the openings in the trees. As we neared Westover, a slope led to higher land and to a riverward, side entrance to the grounds. Passing through this, a tangle of vines swinging with the great iron gate, we followed the walk toward the house.

Just before reaching the ballroom wing, we paused in front of a small brick outbuilding to have a few appropriate shivers over what was under it. From reading and from our talks at Westover, we knew about the mysterious subterranean chambers down there.

To be sure, we had not seen them yet (one thing and another having got in the way of our making a visit to them); but surely one need not always wait to see; one can shiver a little anyway upon hearsay.

And the hearsay was like this. Somewhere underneath that brick outbuilding was an opening down into the earth, like a dry well, some fifteen or twenty feet deep. At the bottom, arched doorways on opposite sides of the shaft opened into two small square rooms. The walls of the well and of the rooms were cement; and the floors were paved with brick. A round stone table used to stand in one of the rooms. From this well once ran two passages or tunnels, large enough for people to go through; one connecting with the house by a curious stairway in the old wing that was destroyed in the war, and the other leading to the river.

We stood looking blankly at the closed outbuilding trying to imagine the hidden rooms and passages beneath it. Tradition told us that they were for refuge from the Indians. That explanation seemed well enough at first. But before we could get into the spirit of it enough to catch even the faintest bit of a warwhoop and to scuttle for the subterranean chambers, we made up our

minds that that was not what the things were for anyway. There had ceased to be much danger from Indians along that part of the James by the time even this old home at Westover was built.

So, casting about for a better explanation, we hit upon the idea that William Byrd had constructed the underground rooms in imitation of Pope's famous grotto, which the Colonel and his daughter Evelyn must have seen when entertained by the poet in his villa at Twickenham. But even after we had pictured the mysterious chambers all hung round with mirrors, just like Pope's, and candles everywhere, we could see that so tame a thing as the grotto theory would never do.

There were so many nice, awful things that such a place would be good for. Spurring our jaded fancy with bits from Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, we got on famously for a while with a pirates' den. We had a long, low, rakish ship lying in the river just off the tunnel's mouth; black-bearded ruffians, with knives between their teeth, stealing ashore and disappearing within the dark underground passage; the great stone table down there heaped with Spanish gold; good Jamaica rum pouring down wicked throats; the dark tunnels ever echoing the rollicking

chorus, "Six men sat on the dead man's chest" — when suddenly it occurred to us that we were somewhat compromising the old colonial grandee, Colonel Byrd. With that we gave the matter up. We quit staring at a closed brick outbuilding with unseeable things down under it, and went on our way. And, as it turned out that we never visited the underground rooms after all, this was as near as we ever came to solving the colonial mystery.

That day, sitting about the fireplace in Colonel Byrd's library, we listened to a pleasant chapter in the story of an old manor-house — the account of the recent restoration of Westover. As in most cases where extensive rehabilitation of colonial homes has been attempted, an interesting part of the work was the opening up of goodly old-time fireplaces that the changing fashions of changing generations had filled in with brick and mortar. Sometimes they had shrunk to the dimensions of a modern grate; sometimes even to that of a stovepipe hole. Indeed, what chronological mile-stones are the various forms of our American fireplaces! As the historic dates grow larger, the fireplaces grow smaller.

Of course Westover never had the hugest

of fireplaces. Even when this old home was built, the shrinkage in chimney-pieces had been going on for some time. No longer was most of the side of a room in a blaze. No longer was the flame fed by a backlog so huge that "a chain was attached to it, and it was dragged in by a horse."

How far removed Westover was from the day of such things, is shown by the noted mantelpiece in the drawing-room. Only with the coming of smaller fireplaces came those elaborate mantelpieces. But the great fireplaces of our ancestors yielded slowly, inch by inch, as it were; and something of the goodly proportions they yet had in Colonel Byrd's day, the hammer and chisel have shown at Westover.

If the exquisite Colonel's doubtless exquisite ghost haunts this home, we can imagine his pleasure when, one wintry night, he found reopened this fine old library fireplace, and sat him down to toast his shapely calves (even ghostly, they must yet be shapely) in the genial old-time glow.

Some of the most interesting features of the work of putting an old homestead back into a period from which it has strayed, grow out of the very limitations. At Westover, while conformity to colonial times is carried

THE DRAWING-ROOM MANTELPIECE AT WESTOVER.

far, even to the exclusion of rocking-chairs, yet there has been no shrinking from anachronisms that comfort or convenience demand.

Eighteenth century fireplaces may blaze and crackle, and quite imagine themselves to be still heating the old house; but somewhere down below is a twentieth century furnace that is quietly doing most of the work.

And what a shock it must be to the colonial ghosts when they stumble in the dark over great claw feet, cold even as their own; the feet of monstrous hollow things, white and awesome as themselves — the things that moderns call bathtubs!

Over in the kitchen, unfortunately for the picturesque, all has to be modern. There the eighteenth century furnishing breaks down altogether. Not from the glowing heart of the old chimney-place, but from a huge, homely range comes the gastronomic hospitality of present-day Westover.

No devotion to the eighteenth century can bring the colonial kitchen back again; send the roaring blaze up the wide chimney; swing the crane with the great kettle into the glow; and rebuild the quaint row of skillet and gridiron and broiler, perched on their little legs over the hot embers of the old hearthstone.

Westover has an interesting reminder of the colonial in a copy of an old survey of the plantation that we saw that day. Our eyes quickly caught the suggestive name given on the map to the low, sandy point at the mouth of Herring Creek, where we had left our shore-boat to wait for us. We had not known that it was a place of such associations as the words "Ducking-stool Point" indicated.

Upon first landing there, we had been impressed with the unusual depth of water just off that point; but we had not suspected how, in colonial times, many a too-talkative woman had also been impressed with it. It was the law, made and provided, that a ducking-stool should be set up "neere the court-house in every county." So, doubtless, in accordance with that law, a long pole used to reach out from our sandy point, having a seat on the end of it, right over the deep water. And, also in accordance with law, the end of the pole sometimes went down into the water, and a shivering woman went with it. But what would you, when "brabbling women slander and scandalize their neighbours, for which their poore husbands are often brought into chargeable and vexatious suits and cast in great damages"?

The survey showed, also, where Westover

TOMBS IN THE OLD WESTOVER CHURCHYARD.
(In the foreground is the tomb of Evelyn Byrd.)

Church stood in colonial days. Near the river a little way above the house, stood not only the church but a court-house and a brewing-house, all in sociable and suggestive proximity. We walked up the river bank to visit the spot.

It is still marked by a few gravestones that remain in the deserted churchyard. Among these is the altar-tomb of Evelyn Byrd. It stands with an iron band about it, holding the aged stones in place. The time-dimmed inscription tells us to "be reminded by this awful Tomb" of many dismal things with which we refuse to associate our thoughts of this lovely colonial girl.

Rather, we recall the story of her intimacy with Mrs. Anne Harrison of Berkeley, and of the compact the two friends made, that whichever should die first should appear at some time to the other. The tale goes on to tell that Mrs. Harrison, after the death of her friend, was walking over to Westover one evening, and as she passed the churchyard she saw the ethereal figure of Evelyn Byrd there by the altar-tomb, smiling in happy fulfilment of the strange tryst.

It was late afternoon when we were ready to take our way for the last time down the strip of sandy beach that led from William

Byrd's old home to ours. The sun slanted low over the Powhatan; in its glow the old manor-house stood out in all its stateliness. We reflected that just as Westover looked then, it had looked when Colonel Byrd himself used to step out from the marble portal to saunter among his trees and flowers, or to take his faultless self out upon the pier perhaps to watch the unloading of the ship from London Towne. Just so the old house had looked through all those days when it was the scene of a luxurious colonial life not excelled by that of the patroons of the Hudson.

Looking from the home out upon the river we saw a low-laden vessel, all sail spread to the soft, faltering breeze, coming slowly up stream on the last of the tide. How she fitted into the old-time setting! She was one of Colonel Byrd's freighting ships just in from overseas. After a tempestuous voyage, and a narrow escape from the Spanish too, she had safely entered Chesapeake Bay and now, the wind serving but ill, she was slowly drifting up the river.

Soon she would touch at the old colonial pier swarming with plantation negroes. To the rhythm of African melodies the cargo would come out of the hold — mahogany fur-

niture, a new statue for the garden, cases of wine, casks of muscovado sugar, puncheons of rum, plantation machinery, sweetmeats and spices, and some bewildered Irish cows. Quite likely, picking their way daintily in the midst of the exciting scene, would come the lady of the manor and Mistress Evelyn to make anxious inquiry for boxes of London finery. And then — but, no! that vessel out on the James, without stopping at all, had sailed on past the old plantation front. Just a common fishing schooner of to-day bound for Richmond! We turned and closed behind us the ancient iron gate of Westover.

CHAPTER XXII

A BAD START AND A VIEW OF BERKELEY

On the next morning, we exercised one of the most enjoyable prerogatives of the houseboater, one that belongs to him as to but few other travellers — that of changing his mind and his destination. We sat down to breakfast with the intention of moving on up the James to Eppes Creek; we rose from the table with the determination to make a run up Powell's Creek, which was a little above us on the other side of the river.

We always enjoyed these changes of mind. They added so much the more to our sense of freedom and independence. There were no bits of cardboard with the names of stations printed on them to predestine our way; no baggage checks to consign our belongings to fixed destinations. Even at the last moment a change of mind, a change of rudder, and a new way and a new destination would lie before us.

Now, our thoughts headed toward Powell's

Creek, because up that stream was another colonial church, called Merchants' Hope Church; and the next day would be Sunday.

Necessarily, such houseboat voyagers as we, that the Sundays usually found up forgotten bits of tidewater, were a trifle irregular in the matter of church-going. Our houseboat would have had to have a church-boat for a consort to make it otherwise. Yet, as Sunday after Sunday Gadabout lay in her quiet creek harbours, the spirit of the day seemed to find her there without the call of church chimes.

Though it was morning when we changed our minds and determined to seek a high-backed pew in old Merchants' Hope Church, it was evening by the time we got under way. And in this case, changing our minds did not work well. We should have come just as near getting to a church and should have saved ourselves trouble, if we had clung to our first intention and had spent that Saturday in moving on up the James.

As we crossed the river on the way to Powell's Creek, a closer study of the sounding-marks on the chart showed a depth of but one half foot at several places on the flats at the mouth of the stream. Evidently, getting into that creek was bound to be a prob-

lem in fractions; and Gadabout was not good at fractions and the day was waning and the tide was setting out.

It seemed that the way to get the best depth of water would be to go to the lower side of the wide, shallow creek-mouth, and then to enter the stream in that affectionate style of navigation called "hugging the shore."

And that is the way we did it. But with all the affection that could be put into the matter, we could not find along that shore any such water as the chart indicated; and Gadabout was beginning to need it sorely. So, we sent the sailor out to see where it had gone to. He found it over on the other side of the creek. Our confidence in the chart had been betrayed. Depending upon it, we had been hugging the wrong shore.

At first, we thought little of the matter; for, our side of the stream having played us false, we felt no hesitancy in transferring our affections to the other side. But we found that poor Gadabout took things much more seriously. She could not so lightly "off with the old love and on with the new." For her the affair had already gone too far; already, for the side she was now on, she had formed a serious, a hopeless, a lasting attachment.

Our craft aground, our prospects of attending church next day vanished. Slowly the tide went down; slowly the moon came up; and Nautica made some candy. By the time it was ready to be put out on the guard to cool, even what little we had found of Powell's Creek had disappeared — all about us was just moonlight and mud. And ahead of us and behind us (sticking down a little way in the mud, but sticking up more in the moonlight) were the two anchors that we had put out to hold us in position when the tide should rise in the night. They looked like great crabs sitting there and watching us.

Of course, sometime in the darkness, Gadabout rose on the flood tide, and perhaps was even ready to cross to the other side of the creek and proceed to church. But nobody else was ready then; and so, finding all asleep, she slowly settled down once more, and we found her in the morning again hard aground. The good minister of Merchants' Hope Church must surely have reached "Seventhly, my brethren," before our houseboat was afloat.

Now, we moved her out in deeper water (for it would not do that she should be aground next day when we ought to be start-

ing for Eppes Creek); and it was gratifying this time when we cast our anchors, to see them go plumping out of sight as anchors should, instead of looking so distressingly unnautical with flukes sticking up in the air.

But mooring a boat (securing her between two anchors, one ahead and one astern) is rather unsatisfactory at the best. Often it is necessary so to hobble your floating home where there is danger of her swinging upon hidden obstructions; but it is hard on the poetry of houseboating. To be held in one position, with unvarying scenes in your windows, is too much like living in a prosaic land home set immovable in sameness.

Your gypsy craft should ride to a single anchor; free to swing to wind and tide in the rhythm of the river. It is of the essence of home life afloat to sit down to dinner heading up-stream, and to rise from table heading down-stream; to open a favourite book with a bit of shore-view in the casement beside you, and to close the chapter with the open river stretching from under your window, your half-drawn shade perhaps cutting the topsail from a distant schooner.

Monday morning dawned bright and fair (as we afterward learned from the sailor); and bright and fair it certainly was when we

made its acquaintance. The day was yet young when everything was ready for the trip up the river, and the shores of the little creek were echoing the harsh clicks of our labouring windlass.

"She's hove short, and all ready to start whenever you are, sir," announced the sailor at the bow door.

Nautica snipped a thread and laid down her sewing; the Commodore tossed his magazine aside. A moment more and we were off. When well out in the river, we headed toward the left bank, for we were to make a landing at the pier above Westover to take on two boxes of provisions that had been left there for us by the Pocahontas. The steamer had gone; everybody about the wharf had gone; but we had arranged to have the boxes left out for us, and there they stood on the end of the pier.

Aboard Gadabout was the stir and bustle usually incident to the making of a landing. Clear and sharp rose the voice of the Commodore; now issuing his orders, now taking them back again. When he could think of nothing more to say, he went below and relieved Nautica at the wheel as our good ship swung beautifully in toward the wharf.

It must be remembered that a houseboat

does not come up to piers like a steamboat, always finding men waiting to catch lines and to help in making landings. Often, as was the way of it that morning, the wandering houseboat comes along to find only an empty pier; and if she wishes to establish any closer relations with it, she must make all the advances herself.

The wind may be blowing strong; the tide running strong — everything strong but the qualifications of the commanding officer; in which case, it is well that preparations for the landing begin early. There should be a coil of rope made ready at either end of the boat, and also a light line with a grapnel attached to it. What is a grapnel? How strange that question sounds to us now, mighty mariners that we have become! But of course we should remember that there was a time when we did not know ourselves. Well, a grapnel is much like one of those fish-hooks that have five points all curving out in different directions, only it usually weighs several pounds.

The value of the grapnel was shown that day at the pier above Westover. Though Gadabout swung to the landing finely, a strong off-shore wind caught her; our ropes fell short; and we should have made but sorry

A TRAPPER'S HOME BY THE RIVERBANK.

"OFTEN . . . THE WANDERING HOUSEBOAT COMES ALONG TO FIND ONLY AN EMPTY PIER."

work of it if a grapnel had not shot out into the air and saved the day. As it fell upon the wharf, the line attached to it was hauled in hand over hand; and though the grapnel started to come along with it, sliding and hopping over the pier, soon one of its points found a crack or a nail or a knot-hole to get hold of; and the houseboat was readily drawn up and made fast to the pilings.

The boxes aboard, our lines were cast off and Gadabout moved on up the James.

Soon we were approaching one of the most historic points on the river. We could tell that by a deserted old manor-house occupying a fine, neglected site on the left bank of the stream.

While the main structure still stood firm, and would for generations to come as it had for generations gone, yet the verandas about it had been partially burned and had collapsed, and the place looked dilapidated and forlorn. In front, the spacious grounds, once terraced gardens, stretched wild and overgrown down to the river, where the straggling ruins of a pier completed the picture of desolation.

But, even neglected and abandoned, this sturdy colonial home, nearly two centuries old, still wore a noble air of family pride; still

looked bravely out upon the river. And why should it not? What house but old Berkeley is the ancestral home of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and of two Presidents of the United States?

This plantation became the colonial seat of the elder branch of the Harrison family about the beginning of the eighteenth century. It passed to strangers less than half a century ago.

From its founding, Berkeley was the home of distinguished men. Here lived Benjamin Harrison, attorney general and treasurer of the colony; and his son, Major Benjamin Harrison, member of the House of Burgesses; and his son, Benjamin Harrison, member of the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence; and his son, William Henry Harrison, famous general and the ninth President of our country; whose grandson, Benjamin Harrison, became our twenty-third President — a striking showing of family distinction, and including the only instance, except that of the Adamses, of two members of the same family occupying the presidential chair.

Very different from the Berkeley that we saw, was that fine old plantation of colonial times. Imagine it, perhaps upon a summer's

BERKELEY.

The ancestral home of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and of two Presidents of the United States.

day in that memorable year of 1776. There are the great fields of tobacco and grain, the terraced gardens gay with flowers, the boats at the landing, and the manor-house standing proudly, "an elegant seat of hospitality."

The master of Berkeley, that tall, dignified colonial, Colonel Benjamin Harrison, is not at home. He is at Philadelphia attending the Continental Congress. Perhaps even now he is affixing his signature, with its queer final flourish, to the Declaration of Independence. In the meantime, in front of the old home, a pretty woman in quaint taffeta "Watteau" and hooped petticoat and dainty high-heeled slippers is playing with a little boy, among the sweet old shrubs and the English roses upon the terraces.

That little boy is to bring added honour to old Berkeley; and one day, as General William Henry Harrison, president-elect of the United States, his love for this mother shall bring him back to this home of his boyhood to write, amidst the tender associations of "her old room," his inaugural address.

After passing Berkeley, we left the buoyed course and ran the rest of the way to Eppes Creek in a narrow side channel that threads among the shallows close along shore. It is

what the river-men call a "slue channel"; and we had to take frequent soundings to follow it. Looking back at dejected old Berkeley, we were glad to know that a new owner of the place was about to restore it.

Gadabout soon approached an opening in the river bank that we knew was the wide mouth of Eppes Creek. We were going to turn into this stream, not merely for the stream itself, but for a convenient anchorage from which to reach the last of the noted river homes that we should visit — Shirley, the colonial seat of the Carters. Our chart showed the mansion as standing just around the next bend of the James. But we were not going around that bend, because the chart showed also this little creek cutting across the point of land lying in the elbow of the river and apparently affording an inside route to Shirley. We should soon learn whether or not Gadabout could navigate it and how near it would take her to the old home.

As we moved slowly into the creek it was between banks in strange and attractive contrast. The starboard side (that from which we hoped to find a way to Shirley) was high and covered with trees of many kinds. The bank to port was low and covered with a marsh forest of cypresses. It was a dark and

gloomy forest, but the spell of its sombre depths drew our eyes quite as often as the cheerfuller charm of the woodland on the other side; and so was equally responsible for the zigzag course that Gadabout was taking.

But it was the high bank that, after a while, was responsible for Gadabout's ceasing to take any course at all. We came about a bend and saw, just ahead, a little cove. There were trees crowding close, rich pines and cedars and bright-beaded holly. One tree leaned far out over the water, and beneath it two row-boats were drawn up to the bank. We thought it must surely be the landing-place for Shirley. Gadabout sidled to starboard, and grapnels were thrown up into the trees to hold her alongshore.

Stepping out on the bank we went up the hill through the woods. On the way we turned and glanced down upon the houseboat. She looked pretty enough, little white and yellow cottage, snuggling close to the bank with a holly tree at her bow and her flags stirring gently in the warm sunny air.

At the top of the hill, we came out upon the edge of a cornfield. Everything was cornfield as far as we could see. No house, no road in sight. Back aboard Gadabout, we

got under way again. But the creek soon lost even its one solid bank and, finding ourselves running between two lines of marsh woods, we turned about and headed back for the place where we had stopped, "Leaning Tree Landing," as we called it.

We had gone but a little way when our rudder-cable snapped, the steering-wheel turned useless, and Gadabout headed for the marsh woods. She minded none of our makeshift devices to shape her course; and we were forced to stop the engine and resort to a more primitive motive power.

The sailor dropped an end of a long pole into the water at the bow of the houseboat and, bending heavily upon the other end, slowly pushed her forward as he walked aft along the guard. Steadily back and forth he paced the rail; steadily, silently, we floated down the stream.

And the silence of our going took hold of us, as we sat lazily in the bow. How in keeping it all seemed with the quiet of the day, the calm of the stream, and the stillness of the woods! And how out of keeping now seemed Gadabout's noisy entrance into that tranquil scene!

"I feel quite apologetic," said Nautica. "Look at these great solemn trees, just like

an assemblage of forest philosophers in the hush of silent deliberation."

"We must have stirred them up a bit," replied the Commodore, "with our puffing and ringing. But I don't think they are deliberating. I believe they are asleep. It seems more like the hush of poppy-land in here to me."

"Yes, that is just it." And the answer really came quite dreamily. "This is the hush of poppy-land, and we are drifting on the quiet brown waterway that leads through the sleepy, endless afternoon."

And the notion pleased, and so did the languor and the heavy content. Slowly and steadily the sailor and the long pole went up and down the guard; slowly and steadily the houseboat moved down the stream.

Now we were skirting the bolder bank where the pines bent heavy heads over the water, the holly crowded close to the shore, and pale tinted reeds made border at the water's edge. Now in rounding a curve, we passed close to the cypress wood fringed with bush and sedge. Delicate brown festoons of vines hung from the branches; and, high out of reach, mats of mistletoe clung. It seemed one with our mood and our fancy when two round yellow eyes stared out of

the shadows, two wide lazy wings were spread, and the bird of daylight slumber took soft, noiseless flight. We were just getting fully in the humour of our new way of travel, drifting on in the world of laze-and-dream, when the whole thing came to an end. A familiar voice from the world of up-and-do was in our ears, and there was Leaning Tree Landing just ahead.

We anchored out in the channel until low tide; then, after sounding about the landing and finding a good depth of water and no obstructions, we drew Gadabout in, bow to the bank, and made fast. We felt almost as though she were a real, true cottage, with that solid land at her door and her roof among the branches.

When we looked from Gadabout's windows next morning, a dense fog had blotted out all of our creek country except that which was close in about us. But what was left was so beautiful as to more than make up for the loss. Nature, like most other women, looks particularly well through a filmy veil. We feared that the mist would soon clear away, but it did not and we sat down to breakfast with our houseboat floating in one of the smallest and fairest worlds that had ever harboured her. A beautiful white-walled

world with some shadowy bits of land here and there, a piece of a misty stream that began and ended in the clouds, and everything most charmingly out of perspective and unreal. Some ghostly trees were near us, delicate veils of mist clinging about their trunks and floating up among the bare branches. Nearer yet, a blur of reeds marked the shore-line. From somewhere out along the river, probably from the lighthouse at Jordan's Point, came the tolling of a fog-bell.

As we watched the scene, a faint glow filtered in through the whiteness, and made it all seem a fairy-land. Indeed, was it not? And were not the little swaying mist-wreaths that wavered in at our windows some dainty elves timidly come to give us greeting? All day the fog held, and the sad tolling of the bell went on. Now and then, the calls of the river craft would come to our ears.

Toward evening the fog thinned and let the moonlight in. Then we were quite sure that Gadabout had indeed come to Fairy-land. Now, if only there were a way leading from Fairy-land to Shirley! And it turned out that there was.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE RIGHT WAY TO GO TO SHIRLEY

EVERYBODY goes to Shirley the wrong way. We found that out by ourselves happening to go the right way.

When you are sailing up the James in your houseboat (You haven't one? Well, a make-believe one will do just as well, and in some ways better), do not pass Eppes Creek, as everybody does, and go to the Shirley pier; but, instead, enter the creek and tie up at Leaning Tree Landing as we did.

Then, instead of taking that trail up the hill that leads only into a cornfield, look for a path leading to the left through the woods. It is not much of a path; and unless you love Nature in even her capricious moods, when she now and then trips the foot of the unwary and mayhap even scratches, it is too bad after all that you came this way. To love of Nature should be added a certain measure of agility, so that you will be all right when you come to the fence. Fortu-

THE FIELD ROAD AND THE QUARTERS.

nately, you can let down the upper rails — being careful to put them back again when you are safe on the other side.

Beyond the fence, a great pasture-field stretches away endlessly. But then everything is on a large scale at Shirley. Ampleness is the keynote; it pervades everything. Before you have half crossed the field, you will come upon a road that will lead you to a little eminence near the quarters.

No, it is not a village that you now see peeping out through the grove over there by the river; it is the group of buildings constituting the homestead of Shirley. In the bright sunlight, you can pick out bits of the mansion through the trees, of the dairy, of the kitchen, and of the smaller buildings; while farther out stand the roomy barns and the quaint turreted dove-cote. All the buildings are of brick and show a warm, dull red.

Time has left few such scenes as this — the completely equipped home-acre of a great seventeenth century American plantation. The scene is not exactly a typical one; for few of such early colonial estates, and indeed not many of the later ones, had homesteads as complete, as substantially built, and on as large a scale as this of Shirley.

Now, as you can need no further guidance,

we are going off some two or three hundred years into the past, to see if we can get hold of the other end of the story of this plantation.

Perhaps the start was "about Christmas time" in the year 1611, when Sir Thomas Dale, High Marshal of the Colony of Virginia, sailed up the river from James Towne; killed or drove away all the Indians hereabout; and then, thinking it ill that so much goodly land should be lying unoccupied, took possession of a large tract of it for the colony. But the part that came to be called Shirley is soon lost sight of in the fogs of tradition. Later, we catch a glimpse of it in the possession of Lord Delaware. But it is not until the middle of the seventeenth century that we get a firm hold of this elusive colonial seat and of its colonial owners.

At that time, in the colony of Virginia, two of the proud families on two of the proud rivers were the Hills, who had recently acquired the plantation of Shirley on the James, and the Carters, who were establishing their seat at Corotoman on the Rappahannock. In the story of these two houses is most of the story of Shirley.

The Hills became one of the leading families in the colony. It was Edward Hill, sec-

ond of the name, who built the present mansion. He was a member of the King's Council; and his position is indicated, and his fortune as well, by the building in those early times of such a home. Antedating almost all of the great colonial homes, it must long have stood a unique mark of family distinction. The exact date of the building of the manor-house is not known, but doubtless it was not far from the middle of the seventeenth century.

In the meantime, the Carters had become notable. This family reached its greatest prominence in the days of Robert Carter, who was one of the wealthiest and most influential men in the colony. In person he was handsome and imposing; in worldly possessions he stood almost unequalled; and in offices and honours he had about everything that the colony could give. His estate included more than three hundred thousand acres of land and about one thousand slaves. Either because of his imposing person or of his power or of his wealth, or perhaps because of all three, he was called "King" Carter. He does seem to have been quite a sovereign, and to have known considerable of the pompous ceremony that "doth hedge a king."

It was in the fourth generation of the

houses of Shirley and of Corotoman, and in the year 1723, that the families were united by the marriage of John, son of "King" Carter, and Elizabeth, daughter of the third Edward Hill. John Carter was a prominent man and the secretary of the colony; Elizabeth Hill was a beauty and the heiress of Shirley. In the descendants of this union the old plantation has remained to this day.

The first time that we went from our creek harbour up to Shirley was a strange time perhaps for people to be abroad in woods and field-roads. The day was one of struggle between fog and sun, neither being able to get his own way, but together making a wonderful world of it. We walked in a luminous mist; the road very plain beneath our feet, but leading always into nothingness, and reaching behind us such a little way as to barely include the tall, following, hazy figure that was Henry.

There was little for us to see, but that little was well worth seeing; only a tree or a clump of bushes or a hedge-row here and there, but all dimmed into new forms and graces for that day and for us.

As we neared a ridge of meadowland, a pastoral for a Schenck took shape in the fog cloud before us. Scattered groups of sheep

appeared close at hand, and, faintly visible beyond them, a denser mass of moving white. No tree nor landmark was to be seen; just set into the soft whiteness, showing mistily, was the snowy flock itself. Sheep grazed in groups, the tan shaded slope in faint colouring beneath them. Here and there a mother turned her head to call back anxiously for the bleating lambkin lost behind the white curtain; and, dim and grotesque, the awkward strayling would come gamboling into sight. Near by on a little hillock, a single sheep stood with its head thrown up, a ghostly lookout. The hidden sun made the haze faintly luminous about this wandering flock of cloudland. We were not the first to move and to break the picture.

As we gained higher ground, a breeze was stirring and the fog was beginning to lift. When we reached the edge of the Shirley homestead and passed the turreted dove-cote, the near-by objects had grown quite distinct. But out on the river the fog yet lay dense; and two boats somewhere in the impenetrable whiteness were calling warningly to each other.

Now we went on toward the manor-house that loomed against a soft background of river fog.

The mansion is wholly unlike either Brandon or Westover, being a massive square building without wings. It is two and a half stories high, with a roof of modified mansard style pierced with many dormer windows. It has both a landward and a riverward front, and both alike. Each front has a large porch of two stories in Georgian design with Doric columns. The walls of the house are laid in Flemish bond, black glazed bricks alternating with the dull red ones. While both the roof and the porches are departures from the original lines of the house, yet they are departures that have themselves attained a dignified age of about a century and a quarter.

Always, in the consideration of colonial homes, Shirley is regarded as one of the finest examples. This means much more than at first appears. For the mansions with which Shirley is usually compared, were built from half a century to a century later.

Continuing along the road as we studied the home, we were led around to the landward front and into the midst of the ancient messuage.

We stood in a great open quadrangle, having the house at one end, the distant barns at the other; on one side the kitchen, a large two-story building, and on the other side a

Riverward Front of Shirley

similar building used for storage and for indoor plantation work. A high box hedge ran across from one of these side buildings to the other, dividing the long quadrangle into halves, one part adjacent to the house and the other to the barns.

The village effect produced by the grouped buildings must have been even more striking in colonial times; for then the manor-house was flanked by two more large brick buildings, forming what might be called detached wings. One of these was still standing up to the time of the Civil War.

The visitor is conscious of two dominant impressions, as he stands thus in the midst of this seventeenth century homestead. The massive solidity of the place takes hold of one first; but, strangely enough, the strongest impression is that of an all-pervading air of youthfulness. Doubtless the oldest homestead on the river, and one of the oldest in the country, it utterly refuses to look its age. Perhaps the solid, square compactness of the buildings has much to do with this. They appear as though built to defy time. Even the shadow of the venerable trees and the ancient ivy's telltale embrace seem powerless to break the spell of perennial youth.

In the home, we met Mrs. Bransford,

widow of Mr. H. W. Bransford, Commander and Mrs. James H. Oliver, U. S. N., and Miss Susy Carter. Mrs. Bransford and Mrs. Oliver are the daughters of the late Mr. and Mrs. Robert Randolph Carter, and are the present owners of the plantation, Mrs. Bransford making her home there. Commander Oliver represents the third consecutive generation of naval officers in the Shirley family.

Upon entering the house in the usual way, from the landward side, the visitor finds himself in a large square hall occupying one corner of the building. This room discloses at a glance the type and the genius of Shirley. It begins at once to tell you all about itself; and when you know this old hall, you have the key to the mansion and to its story. It is truly a colonial "great hall." It tells you that by its goodly old-time ampleness, its high panelled walls with their dimming portraits, its great chimneypiece flanked by tall cupboards, and its massive overshadowing stairway.

The chief architectural feature of the room is this stairway. Starting in one corner, it rises along the panelled wall until half way to the ceiling, then turns sharply out into the room for the remainder of its ascent to the

THE OLD "GREAT HALL."

second floor, thus exposing overhead a handsome soffit. The effect, in connection with the great panelled well of the staircase, is one of rich and goodly ancientness.

Indeed, though you may enter Shirley feeling that the house, like some long-lingering colonial belle, is perhaps not quite frank with you about its age, you will not find the hall taking part in any such misrepresentation. Despite some modern marks and even the fact that the fireplace has been closed, this room says in every line that it is very old.

It stands true to the memory of its seventeenth-century builder who had known and loved the "great halls" of "Merrie England." It tells of the time when the life of a household centred in the spacious hall; when there the great fire burned and the family gathered round — of the time when halls were the hearts, not the mere portals, of homes.

And so in this room, as in few others in our country, does the visitor find the setting and the atmosphere of manor-house life in early colonial days. He can well fancy this "great hall" of Shirley in the ruddy light of flaming logs that burned in the wide fireplace two centuries and a half ago. Dusky in far corners or sharply drawn near the fire-

light, stood, in those days, chests and tables and forms and doubtless a bed too with its valance and curtains. In a medley typical of the times in even the great homes, were saddles, bridles, and embroidery frames, swords, guns, flute, and hand-lyre.

Here, in a picturesque and almost mediæval confusion, the family mostly gathered, while favourite hounds stretched and blinked in the chimney-place beside the black boy who drowsily tended the fire.

Here, the long, narrow "tabull-bord" was spread with its snowy cloth, taken from the heavy chest of linen in the corner, of which my lady of the manor was prodigiously proud. Upon the cloth were placed soft-lustred pewter and, probably almost from the first, some pieces of silver too. The salt was "sett in the myddys of the tabull," likely in a fine silver dish worthy its important function in determining the seating about the "bord." As family and guests gathered round, the host and hostess took places side by side at one end; near them the more important guests were given seats "above the salt," while lesser folk and children sat "below the salt."

Then, from the distant kitchen in the quadrangle, came slaves or indentured servants

bearing the steaming food in great chargers and chafing-dishes. Doubtless, in those earliest days, the food was eaten from wooden trenchers, not plates; while from lip to lip the communal bowl went round. Knives and spoons were plentiful, but even in such a home as Shirley forks were still a rarity; and the profusion of napkins was well when helpful fingers gave service to healthy appetites.

But that was the hall life of very early days. Gradually, in the colonies as in England, the evolution of refinement specialized the home; developed drawing-rooms, dining-rooms, libraries; and so took away from the "great halls" almost all of this intimate life of the household.

There is something pathetic in this desertion of the ancient, central hearthstone. We thought of Shirley's old hall growing sadly quiet and chill as it lost the merry chatter about the "tabull-bord"; as saddles and bridles jingled there for the last time on their way to some far outbuilding; as the gentlewomen carried their needlework away, and the little maids followed with their samplers. At last, all the old life was gone. Even the master himself came no longer to mull his wine by the andirons; and the very dogs

stretched themselves less often and with less content at the chimney-side.

All the rooms at Shirley are richly panelled to the ceiling, and have heavy, ornate cornices and fine, carved mantelpieces and doorways. The examples of interior woodwork especially regarded by connoisseurs are the panelling in the morning-room, the elaborately carved mantel in the drawing-room, and the handsome doorway between that room and the dining-room.

Upstairs, a central hallway runs through the house, double doors opening at both riverward and landward ends upon broad porticoes. The bedrooms on either hand are panelled to the ceiling. They have deep-set windows, open fireplaces, and quaint old-time furnishings.

And people slept here back in the seventeenth century; dreamed here in those faraway times when James Towne, now long buried and almost forgotten, was the capital of the little colony. Here, in succeeding generations, have slept many notable guests of Shirley. Tradition includes among these the Duke of Argyle, LaFayette, our own George Washington, and the Prince of Wales.

Here, too, are some of the oldest ghosts in America. Most of these are quiet, well-

THE DRAWING - ROOM.

behaved members of the household; but one ancient shade, Aunt Pratt by name, seems to presume upon her age as old people sometimes will, and is really quite hard to get along with.

Listen to an instance of her downright unreasonableness. Her portrait used to hang in the drawing-room among those of the Hills (she is or was, or however you say it, a sister of the Colonel Hill who built the mansion); but having become injured it was taken down and put away face to the wall. Immediately, this ghostly Aunt Pratt showed deep resentment. Womanlike, she threw herself into a chair in one of these bedrooms and rocked and rocked violently. Of course she disturbed the whole household; but no matter how noiselessly people stole in to catch her at her tantrums, she was always too quick for them — the room was empty, the chairs all still. At last the picture was got out, repaired, and rehung. At once all was peace and quiet; Aunt Pratt had had her way.

CHAPTER XXIV

FROM CREEK HARBOUR TO COLONIAL RECEPTION

EPPES CREEK was the most remote and isolated of all our James River harbours. Gadabout was like a bit of civilization that had got broken off and had drifted away into the wild. The stream was such a mere ribbon with such tall trees along its banks, that we looked upward to but a narrow lane of open sky. Sometimes the lane was blue, sometimes gray, and sometimes dark and set with twinkling stars.

The wood across the creek from us was a dismal looking place. The trees were swamp cypresses that had lost their summer green, and stood drooping and forlorn in the low, marshy soil. Nautica wasted a good deal of sympathy upon them as she compared them with the richly clothed pines and the luxuriant holly upon our side of the stream.

There doubtless was game in that desolate wood; although about the only living things

that we saw in it, even when we rowed close along its ragged shore, were owls. At night, strange, uncanny cries came out of the wood, and probably out of the owls also; but such sad and querulous cries as may well have been the plaints of the mournful marsh forest itself. Upon our Shirley shore too, there lived an owl, evidently of a different kind. We never saw him; but at night he worked untiringly upon a voluminous woodland edition of "Who's Who."

In this harbour, we heard often the stirring cry out of the high heavens that our ears had caught once in our anchorage at Westover. And now we saw the wild geese themselves.

Each time, at the first faint "honk," we got quickly to the windows or out on deck, and stood waiting for the beautiful V-shaped flight to come swinging into our sky-lane. And with what a glorious sweep the birds came on! And to what gloriously discordant music!

Sometimes they went over in V's that were quite regular; but often the diverging lines would grow wavy, the beautiful flying letter still holding but swinging in and out as though blown about on the face of the sky.

Perhaps we had something to do with those

variants of the wild goose's favourite letter. Quite likely the sight of Gadabout, fluttering her flags down there in Eppes Creek, made those wise old gander leaders veer in a way somewhat disconcerting to their faithful followers.

But on they came, and on they went in their wonderful flight through sunshine and through storm, by day and by night; leaving a strangely roused and quickened world behind them. Just a fleet passing of wings, a clamour of cries — why should one's heart leap, and his nerves go restless, and joy and sadness get mixed up inside him? A few birds flying over — yet stirring as a military pageant! A jangle of senseless "honks" — yet in it the irresistible urge of bugle and drum!

One cannot explain. One can only stand and look and listen, till the living, flying letter is lost in the sky; till his ear can no longer catch the glorious, wild clangour of "the going of the geese."

Isolated as our anchorage was, we had a connecting link between Gadabout and civilization. It was about three feet long, of a sombre hue, and its name was Bob. Bob brought us milk and eggs and our mail, and ran errands generally. He was usually at-

tended by such a retinue that only the smallest picaninnies could have been left back at the quarters.

Sometimes, Bob lightened his labours by having a member of his following carry a pail or the mail-bag. This worked badly; for it was only by such badges of office that we were able to tell which was Bob. But after several small coins had gone into the wrong ragged hats, Bob grasped the situation; and, in a masterly way, solved the question of identity without losing the services of his satellites. Henceforth, when we heard the chattering boys coming through the woods, if we looked out promptly enough, we would see Bob relieving some one of his doubles of pail or mail-bag; and by the time he reached the houseboat, he would be in full possession of all means of identification.

"Would you like to go to meet the ladies and gentlemen on the walls?" Mrs. Bransford asked one day at Shirley.

The invitation was accepted with as much alacrity as if we had feared that the reception hours were almost over. But there was really no need of haste; for the lines of notables on Shirley's walls stand there from generation to generation, yet receiving always

with such dignity and courtesy as permit not the slightest sign of weariness or expression of being bored.

In meeting those old-time owners and lovers of Shirley, the visitor is passed from one hand-clasp to another, as it were, down through the generations of colonial times.

Giving precedence to age, we made our first fancied obeisance before two distinguished looking people who, however, did not seem entitled to any consideration whatever on the ground of age, being both in the prime of life. And yet, these were Colonel and Mrs. Edward Hill, second of the name at Shirley, and the first master and mistress of the present manor-house.

We were a little surprised at the Colonel's appearance; for he was clean shaven and wore a wig. Now, we had been hobnobbing long enough with those beginners of our country — Captain John Smith, Sir Edwin Sandys, Lord Delaware, and the rest — to know that they were a bearded set and hadn't a wig amongst them.

Fortunately, we remembered in time that this portrait-gentleman, old as he was, did not quite reach back to the days of those first settlers; and that he had lived to see the great change of fashion (in the reign of

Charles II) that made Englishmen for generations whiskerless and bewigged.

Though our land was settled by bearded men, with just the hair on their heads that Nature gave them (and sometimes, when the Indians were active, not all of that), yet the country was developed and made independent and set up as a nation by smooth-faced men, most fuzzily bewigged. That reign of the razor that began in the days of Colonel Hill, was a long one, and, later, determined the appearance of the Father of our Country. Imagine George Washington with a Van Dyck beard!

Of course it was bad form for us to stand there staring at the Colonel while we reasoned out all this matter of the beards and the wigs. Now the Commodore, at a suggestion from Nautica's elbow, shifted to the other foot and cleared his throat to say something. But what was there to say? It is a little trying, this meeting people who cannot converse intelligently upon anything that has happened since the seventeenth century.

At last, we murmured something about Charles II; and, to make sure, let the murmuring run over a little into the reigns of James II and of William and Mary, and then passed on; though the Commodore felt

there should have been at least some slight allusion to the pyramids and the cave-dwellers.

We must have taken very slowly the few steps that carried us to the next member of the receiving party; for in that time the world moved on a generation, and we found ourselves paying respects to no less a personage than "King" Carter himself. Too modest to suppose that he had come over from Corotoman on our account, we strongly suspected that the matter of alliance between the families of Hill and of Carter was in the air; which would account for the presence of the potentate of the Rappahannock.

He looked very imposing in his velvets and his elaborate, powdered periwig, standing ceremoniously, one hand thrust within his rich, half-open waistcoat.

Now was the time for all that we knew about Queen Anne and King George the First, and about the recent removal of the colonial capital from James Towne to Williamsburg.

The next dignitaries were very near; but again it took a generation to get to them, the names being John Carter (usually called Secretary Carter from his important colonial office) and Elizabeth Hill Carter, his wife.

These were the young people who united the houses of Shirley and Corotoman. So, even yet, we had got down only to the days of George the Second.

Secretary and Mrs. Carter were a handsome pair; she, fair and girlish, with an armful of roses; he, dark and courtly and one of the most attractive looking figures we had met in our travels in Colonial-land. These people could not tell us much about the old manor-house; for, while possessing two of the finest plantations in the colonies, Shirley and Corotoman, they made their home chiefly at Williamsburg.

However, they were especially interesting people to meet because of their familiarity with the first half of the eighteenth century, that brightest and most prosperous period of colonial life. They could tell us at first hand of those happy, easy-going times that lay between the long struggle to establish the colonies and the fierce struggle to make them free.

Though neither Mr. nor Mrs. Carter exactly said so, yet we gathered the idea that those were days of much dress and frivolity. It seems that ships came from everywhere with handsome fabrics and costly trifles; and that rich colonials strove so manfully and so

womanfully to follow the capricious foreign fashions (by means of dressed dolls received from Paris and London) that usually they were not more than a year or two behind the styles.

We could not help feeling that the matter of wigs must have been an especially troublesome one. As styles changed in England, these important articles of dress (often costing in tobacco the equivalent of one hundred dollars) had to be sent to London to be made over. Between the slowness of ships and the slowness of wig-makers, it must often have happened that even such careful dressers as the fastidious Secretary himself would be wearing wigs that would scarcely pass muster at the Court of St. James or at Bath. Indeed, Secretary Carter did not deny there being some truth in this; but he appeared so at ease that day at Shirley that we knew, on that occasion at least, he was sure of his wig.

One more progression along the receiving line, one more generation passed by the way, and we came upon Charles Carter, with his strong, kindly face, a gentleman of the days of George III and of the last days of colonial times.

And what days those were! The days of stamp acts and " tea parties " and minute men;

of state conventions and continental congresses; of Lexington and Valley Forge and the surrender of Cornwallis; of the Articles of Confederation and the formation of the Union. This Charles Carter saw our nation made and, in the councils of his colony, helped to make it. Here, in old Shirley, he put down the cup from which he had right loyally drunk the colonial toast, "The King! God bless him!" and he took it up again to loyally and proudly drink to "George Washington and the United States of America."

We met still other old-time people at the manor-house that day; but it would not do to try to tell about them all. The omitted ones do not count much, being chiefly wives. Everybody knows that in meeting colonial people it is scarcely worth while considering a man's wife, for so soon she is gone and he has another.

Truly, Shirley's colonial reception was very enjoyable, we thought, as we took a last glance at the serene, old-time faces and caught a last whiff of ambergris from the queer, old-time wigs.

CHAPTER XXV

AN INCONGRUOUS BIT OF HOUSEBOATING

By this time, we were becoming anxious about the lateness of the season. Of course it was only through some mistake that we were getting all those fine warm days in December. Perhaps Nature had not had her weather eye open when Father Time wet his thumb and turned over to the last page of the calendar. But now, there was something in the look of the sky and in the feel of the air to make us fearful that the mix-up of the seasons had been discovered, and that winter was being prodded to the front.

Still we lingered in Eppes Creek, and soon we could not do otherwise than linger; for we wakened one morning to find the stream frozen over, and Gadabout presenting the incongruous spectacle of a houseboat fast in the ice.

All that day and the next the coldness held; and the ice and the tide battled along the creek with crackings and roarings and,

now and then, reports like pistol shots. This surely was strange houseboating. It was a serious matter too. We knew that we might be held in the grip of the ice indefinitely. We did not care to spend the winter in Eppes Creek; nor could we abandon our boat there.

Throwing on our heavy wraps and trying to throw off our heavy spirits, we went above and paced the deck. In mockery our flags rippled under the northwest wind; from our flower-boxes, leafless, shrivelled little arms were held up to us; while our bright striped awning, with all its associations of sunshine and summer-time, was close furled and frozen stiff and hung with icicles.

We were surprised enough when the weather suddenly changed again, and the bright, warm sun set up such a thawing as soon sent the ice out of the creek and our anxieties with it. But no time was to be lost in getting away from that beautiful, treacherous stream. We should make one more visit to Shirley and then head again up river. But that last visit should be a quite conventional one; we should run the houseboat around to the regular steamboat pier in front of the old manor-house.

It was a warm, hazy afternoon down in Eppes Creek when we untied our ropes from

the trees (cast them off, we ought to say), and Gadabout pulled her nose from the reedy bank and slowly backed out into the stream. She was obeying every turn of the steering-wheel perfectly (as indeed she always did except when the mischievous wind put notions into her head); and it was not her fault at all when her bow swung round under the tree that leaned out over the water and almost knocked her little chimney off. We dropped down the stream and passed out into the river where everything was softened and beautified by the light fog.

Skirting the low northern shore, we looked across the river at the high southern one where, through the mist, we could see the town of City Point and the bold promontory that marked where the Appomattox was flowing into the James. Upon the tip of the promontory was the home of the Eppes family, "Appomattox." While the present house is not a colonial one, the estate is one of the oldest in the country.

Now, just ahead of us was the Shirley pier on one side of the river and the village of Bermuda Hundred on the other. We headed first for the village, our intention being to get some supplies there.

We could not see much of Bermuda Hun-

THE KITCHEN BUILDING, FIFTY YARDS FROM THE MANOR-HOUSE.

dred, perhaps because there was not much to see. It consists principally of age, having been founded only four years after the settlement of James Towne. Still, we let the sailor go ashore for butter and eggs, trusting that both would be as modern as possible. Our supplies aboard, Gadabout quickly carried us across the river and landed us at Shirley.

In that last visit to the old home, we went across the quadrangle and into the kitchen building, with its cook-room on one side of the hall and its bake-room on the other. Of course most of the colonial kitchen appointments had long since disappeared; but we were glad to see, in the stone-paved bake-room, the old-time brick ovens. With their cavernous depths, they were quite an object lesson in early Virginia hospitality.

And can any modern ranges bake quite as perfectly as did those colonial brick ovens? After a fire of oven-wood had flamed for hours in one of those brick chambers, and at last the iron door had been opened and the ashes swept out, the heated interior was ready to receive the meats and breads and pastry, and to bake them "to a turn."

When, in the restoration of Mount Vernon, the kitchen was reached, recourse was had to Shirley's kitchen. Drawings were made

of an unusual colonial table, of a pair of andirons with hooks for spits to rest on, and of several other old-time cookery appointments; and, from these drawings, were constructed the duplicates that are now in the Mount Vernon kitchen.

It was on our way from the kitchen to the mansion that we came upon another visitor to Shirley. She was short and round and black and smiling and "feelin' tol'ble, thank you, ma'am." This, we learned, was Aunt Patsy. She had "jes heard dat Miss Marion done come home"; and so, arrayed in her best clothes including a spotless checked apron, she had come to "de gre't house" to pay her respects to Mrs. Oliver.

Drawn out somewhat for our benefit, she gave her views upon the subject of matrimony.

"I been married five times," she said. We were not particularly surprised at that; but were scarcely prepared for the added statement, "an' I done had two husban's."

However, no one could fail to understand Aunt Patsy's position, and to heartily agree with her, when she came to explain her marital paradox.

"De way 'tis is dis way," she said. "What I calls a *husban'* is one dat goes out, he do,

A BRICK OVEN IN THE BAKE-ROOM.

an' gethahs up" (here, a sweeping gesture with the apron, suggestive of lavish ingathering), "gethahs up things an' brings 'em in to me. But what I calls *havin' a man aroun'* is whar he sets by de fiah and smokes he pipe, while I goes out an' wuks an' brings things home, an' he eats what I gives him. An' dat's how come I been married five times, an' I done had two husban's."

Before the old oak chest was opened for us, that day at Shirley, we knew that this colonial home was rich in antique silver. Yet, the family speak of the many pieces as "remnants," because of the still greater number lost at the time of the war. The plate was sent for safe-keeping to a man in Richmond who was afterward able to account for but a small part of it. Evidently, the Hills and the Carters went far in following the old colonial custom of investing in household silver. And as an investment the purchase of this ware was largely regarded in those days; family plate being deemed one of the best forms in which to hold surplus wealth.

Different periods are represented in the old pieces yet remaining at Shirley. There are the graceful, classic types of the days of the Georges; the earlier ornate, rococo forms; and the yet earlier massive styles of the time of

Queen Anne and long before. Among the most ancient pieces, are heavy tankards that remind one of the long ago, when such great communal cups went round from merry lip to merry lip — microbes all unknown. The numerous spoons too speak of the time when there were no forks to share their labours. Most of the silver remaining to-day is engraved with the coat of arms of the Carters.

Suggestive of the days when colonial belles were toasted about Shirley's table, are the old punch bowl and the punch strainer and the wine coasters; though a more noteworthy object, having the same associations, is an antique mahogany wine chest with many of the original cut glass bottles still in its compartments.

And looking at Shirley's old silver in Shirley's old dining-room, we thought of the lavish colonial entertainments in which both had played their part. What hospitable places were those early planters' homes! As courts, assemblies, races, funerals, weddings, and festivals took the people up and down the country, they found few inns; but, instead, at every great plantation, wide-spreading roofs and ever-open doors. The spirit of welcome even stood at the gates and laid hands upon the

SOME NOTEWORTHY PIECES OF OLD SHIRLEY PLATE.

passing traveller, drawing him up the shady avenues and into the hospitable homes.

In the days of the colonial Carters (who, through a complicated network of intermarriages, were cousins to all the rest of Virginia), Shirley must often have been full to overflowing.

And, along with our thoughts of Shirley's hospitality, came the recollection of a pretty story that had been told to us one day at Brandon by Miss Mary Lee, daughter of General Robert E. Lee. It was a story of one of the merry, old-time gatherings about Charles Carter's long table in the Shirley dining-room. Among the guests was a dashing young cavalry officer who had won fame and the rank of general in the Revolutionary War; and who, in his unsatisfied military ardour, was contemplating joining the Revolutionary Army of France. But just now, he was contemplating only his host and his dinner.

Suddenly, he became aware of a flushed and charming maiden in distress. She had lifted a great cut glass dish filled with strawberries, and it was more than her little hands could hold. She strove to avert a crash; and, just in time, the gallant young General caught the appealing look from the dark eyes and the toppling dish from the trembling

hands. But in saving the bowl and the berries, he lost his heart.

And the maiden was Anne Hill Carter, daughter of the genial host; and the young General was "Light Horse Harry" Lee. The dreams of further glory on French battlefields were abandoned; and there was another feast at Shirley when bridal roses of June were in bloom. The young people went to live at Stratford, the ancestral home of the Lees; and there was born their famous son, Robert E. Lee.

As Shirley's old dining-room thus brought to our minds that greatest Virginian of our day, so it brought to mind the greatest Virginian of all days; for, even as we looked at silver and thought of love stories, a life-size portrait of George Washington, by Charles Wilson Peale, stood looking down upon us from the panelled wall.

It is a noted and invaluable canvas that hangs there at Shirley, and it is doubtless a good likeness of the Father of our Country; but it is not just the George Washington that most of us have in our mind's eye. When the average American thinks of hatchets and cherry trees and abnormal truthfulness, the face that rises before him is that benign and fatherly one that he has seen a thousand times

PEALE'S PORTRAIT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

in the popular reproductions of the portrait by Gilbert Stuart. Just as for generations only the good has been told of George Washington, so has this handsomest picture (doubtless a trifle flattering) always been the popular one.

However, in this day, when the ideal George Washington of story is being ruthlessly brushed aside in the search for the real flesh-and-blood man, any canvas also that has idealized him is somewhat in jeopardy.

It is well that the Washington of Sparks and of Irving and of Stuart should be superseded by the truer Washington of Mitchell and of Ford and of Peale; but the result will be that, for a while, the country will scarcely recognize its own father.

Always at Shirley our interest came back to the old colonial hall. Of course, to get the good of it, one had to set one's eyes so as to throw out of focus many marks of modernism; but that adjustment would almost come of itself with a little study of quaint transoms, or of ancient hatchments, or, above all, of the time-worn stairway.

Why is it that the spirit of the long-ago so clings about an old stairway? Why should the empty stair seem to remember so much, to suggest so much, of a life that came to it

only in fitful passings and that left nothing of itself behind?

There were no signs of that long by-gone life upon Shirley's stairway, save for a dimming of the old rail where countless hands — strong, feeble, fair — had lightly rested or, more helpless, clung; and save for that worn trail of the generations that followed up the dull, dark treads. But even these had much to tell of the passings for nearly two centuries and a half up and down this household highway: of the masterful tread of spur-shod boots, the dancing of the belle's slim-slippered feet, the pompous double steps of bumpy baby shoes, the gouty stump of old grandsire, and the faithful shamble of the black boy at his heels.

That day (regretfully our last in this colonial home) not only the stairway but all of the old house seemed inclined to become reminiscent. Nautica noticed this in the quiet drawing-room that would keep bringing up by-gone times, and, she insisted, by-gone people too. In the great hall, even the Commodore felt the mood of old Shirley and the presence of a life that all seemed natural enough, but that must have come a good ways out of the past.

On the staircase, despite the dim light over

there (or because of it), one could even catch sight of a shadowy old-time company.

There were stately figures passing up and down: the old lords of the wilderness in velvet coats and huge wigs, and ladies of the wilderness too in rich brocades and laced stomachers. There were many slender and youthful figures. Charmingly odd and quaint were the merry groups of girls, catching and swaying upon the shadowy stair; dainty ruffles peeping through the balusters; laughing faces bending above the dark, old rail. And fine indeed were the gallants that did them homage; those young colonials of bright velvets and flowered waistcoats and lace ruffles and powdered periwigs.

Now, from the stairway the old-time life spread throughout the old-time home. Shirley was living over again some merry-making of colonial days. That was the Governor that just passed with the glint of gold lace and the glint of gold snuff-box; and that, a councillor's lady that rustled by in stiff silks, her feet in gold-heeled slippers and her powdered head dressed "Dutch." And quite as fine and quite as quaint were the ladies that followed in their gay flowered "sacques" looped back from bright petticoats and point lace aprons.

It was all as London-like as might be: rich velvets and brocades, wide-hooped skirts and stiff stomachers, laced coats and embroidered waistcoats, broad tuckers and Mechlin ruffles, high-heeled shoes and handsome buckles, powdered wigs and powdered puffs, and crescent beauty patches.

Evidently, by colonial time, twilight was coming on; for now the fragrant bayberry candles were lighted. There was the faint tinkle of a harpsichord. Dim figures moved in the stately minuet; their curtsies, punctiliously in keeping with the last word from London, were "slow and low."

Little groups gathered about the card tables, where fresh candles and ivory counters were waiting. Lovers found their way to deep window-seats; and lovers of yet another sort to brimming glasses and colonial toasts, and perhaps to wigs awry.

It was the old-time Shirley, the strange, incongruous Shirley that was a bright bit of English manor life within; and, without, wilderness and savages and tobacco-fields and Africans. In from the life of the old messuage, came a touch of the barbaric; weird minor songs that belonged with the hot throb of the African tom-tom floated in through the deep windows, and strangely mingled

with the thin tinkle of the harpsichord and the tender strains of an old English ballad.

The green bayberry candles grew dim, and in their fragrant smoke the old colonials faded away. Our visit at Shirley was over.

Out in the quadrangle, we turned for a last look at the homestead, and were almost forced to doubt that old colonial scene that we had just left within. There stood the fine buildings in perfect preservation, insisting at last as they had insisted at first that this matter of old age was but a huge mistake — that they had been built but yesterday.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE END OF THE VOYAGE

BEFORE daylight on the following morning Gadabout was awake and astir. She had resolved to catch the early tide and finish her James River cruise that day by a final run to the head of navigation at Richmond.

For the last time the clacking windlass was calling the sleeping anchor from its bed in the river; the Commodore was hanging out the sailing-lights; and Nautica (who could not find the dividers) was stepping off the distance to Richmond on the chart with a hairpin.

How dreary a start before dawn sounds to a landsman! The hated early call; the hasty breakfast with coffee-cup in one hand and time-table in the other; the dismal drive through dull, sleeping streets; the cheerless station; the gloomy train-shed with its lines of coaches wrapped in acrid engine smoke.

But the houseboater knows another way. For him, the early call is the call of the tide

that finds ready response from a lover of the sea. Does the tide serve before dawn, man of the ship? Then before dawn its stir is in your blood; your anchor is heaved home; your sailing-lights, white and green and red, are bravely twinkling; your propellers are tossing the waters astern; and you are off.

You are off with the flood just in from the sea, or with the ebb that is seeking the sea; and with it you go along a way where no one has passed before — an evanescent way that is made of night shades and river mists. And after a while you come upon a wonderful thing — almost the solemn wonder of creation, as, from those thinning, shimmering veils, the world comes slowly forth and takes shape again.

When the real world took shape for Gadabout that morning on the James, she was some distance above Shirley and the river was a smaller river than we had seen at any time before. By the chart, we observed that it was a comparatively narrow stream all the rest of the way to Richmond.

We had now entered upon a portion of the old waterway that Nautica insisted had been done up in curl-papers. Here, the voyager must sail around twenty miles of frivolous loops to make five miles of progress.

Upon coming to a group of buildings indicated on the chart and standing close to the right bank, we knew that Gadabout had navigated the first of the fussy curls. Around it, we had travelled six miles since leaving Shirley, and now had the satisfaction of knowing that the old manor-house itself stood just across from these buildings, less than a mile away.

On a little farther, we passed a fine plantation home called Curle's Neck. A long while after that, another large plantation, Meadowville, came alongside. But the curious thing was that, at the same time, alongside came Curle's Neck again. We had travelled something over four miles since leaving it, yet there it stood directly opposite and less than three quarters of a mile from us.

Perhaps the river observed that we were getting a little out of patience; for, almost immediately, it sought to beguile us by bringing into view one of its show points, a landing on the left bank with a large brick house near by. The chart told us that this was Varina; and the guide-books told us a pretty story about how here, in their honeymoon days, lived John Rolfe and Pocahontas.

Although that honeymoon was almost three

VARINA.

centuries gone, and there was nothing left at Varina to tell of it, yet somehow our thoughts quickened and Gadabout's engines slowed as we sailed along the romantic site.

To be sure, to keep up the spirit of romance one has to overlook a good deal. The fact that John Rolfe had been married before and the report that Pocahontas had been too, somewhat discouraged sentiment. And then, was it love, after all, that built the rude little home of that strange pair somewhere up there on the shore? Or, had Cupid no more to do with that first international marriage in our history than he has had to do with many a later one? Can it be that politics and religion drew John Rolfe to the altar? and that a broken heart led Pocahontas there?

Poor little bride in any event! A forest child — wrapped in her doe-skin robe, the down of the wild pigeon at her throat, her feet in moccasins, and her hair crested with an eagle's feather; bravely struggling with civilization, with a new home, a new language, new customs, and a new religion.

How many times, when it all bore heavy on her wildwood soul, did she steal down to this ragged shore, push out in her slender canoe, and find comfort in the fellowship of this turbulent, untamable river! And how

often did she turn from her home to the wilderness, slipping in noiseless moccasins back into the narrow, mysterious trails of the red man, where bended twig and braided rush and scar of bark held messages for her!

Then came the time when the river and the forest were lost to her. The princess of the wilderness had become the wonder of a day at the Court of King James. Almost mockingly comes up the old portrait of her, painted in London when she had "become very formall and civill after our English manner." The rigid figure caparisoned in the white woman's furbelows; the stiff, heavy hat upon the black hair; the set face, and the sad dark eyes — a dusky woodland creature choked in the ruff of Queen Bess.

When Varina was left behind, we fell to berating the tortuous river again. Of course we did not think for a moment that the troublesome curlicues we were finding had always been there. When the river was the old, savage Powhatan, we may be sure it never stooped in its dignity of flow to such frivolity. These kinks were silly artificialities that came when the noble old barbarian was civilized and named in honour of a vain and frivolous foreign king.

Now, just ahead of us, was the most foolish

frizzle of all. It was a loop five miles around, and yet with the ends so close together that a boy could throw a stone across the strip of land between. At a very early day, sensible folk lost patience and sought, by digging a canal across the narrow neck, to cut this offensive curl off altogether.

Some Dutchmen among the colonists were the first to try this (and Dutchmen understand waterway barbering better than anybody else); but they were unsuccessful. Their efforts seem to have resulted only in giving the place the name of Dutch Gap. Many years ago, the United States Government took up the work and, in 1872, the five-mile curl was effectually cut off by the Dutch Gap Canal.

A good deal of interesting history is associated with this loop of the James. Here, but four years after the coming of those first colonists, the town of Henrico or Henricopolis was founded. The place made a somewhat pretentious beginning and was doubtless intended to supersede James Towne as the capital of the colony. Steps were taken to establish a college here. If they had been successful, Harvard College could not lay claim to one of its present honours, that of being the earliest college in America. But

the Indian massacre of 1622 caused the abandonment of the college project and of Henricopolis too.

We passed into the canal, which was so short that we were scarcely into it before we were out again and headed on up the river. The banks of the stream grew higher and bolder, and we were soon running much of the time between bluffs with trees hanging over.

On some of the bald cliffs buzzards gathered to sun themselves; and they lay motionless even as we passed, their wings spread to the full in the fine sunshine. It was almost the sunshine of summer-time. In its glow we could scarcely credit our own recollections of some wintry bits of houseboating; and as to that story in our note-books about our being ice-bound in Eppes Creek, it was too much to ask ourselves to believe a word of it.

In colonial times there were a number of fine homes along this part of the James, but most of them have long since disappeared. Just after passing Falling Creek we came upon one colonial mansion yet standing. It belonged in those old times to the Randolphs, and is best known perhaps as the home of the colonial belle, Mistress Anne Randolph.

DUTCH GAP CANAL.

FALLING CREEK.

Among the beaux of the stirring days just before the Revolution, she was a reigning toast under the popular name of "Nancy Wilton." The second Benjamin Harrison of Brandon was among her wooers; and it is to his courtship that Thomas Jefferson refers when expressing, in one of his letters, the hope that his old college roommate may have luck at Wilton. He did have. And we remembered the sweet-faced portrait at Brandon of "Nancy Wilton" Harrison.

Soon, our course was along a narrow channel saw-toothed with jetties on either hand. The signs of life upon the river told that we were nearing Richmond. We passed some work-boats, tugs, dredges, and such craft, and everybody whistled.

Over the top of a rise of land that marked the next bend of the river, we saw an ugly dark cloud. It had been long since we had seen a cloud like that; but there is no mistaking the black hat of a city.

So, there was Richmond seated beside the falls in the James — those water-bars that the river would not let down for any ship to pass; there was where our journey would end. To be sure, long years ago, the pale-faces outwitted the old tawny Powhatan by building a canal around its barriers. Their ships

climbed great steps that they called locks; and, passing around the falls and rapids, went up and on their way far toward the mountains. But the river knew the ways of the white man, and kept its water-bars up and waited.

After a while the pale-faces took to a new way of getting themselves and their belongings over the country; they went rolling about on rails instead of floating on the water; and before long, they almost forgot the old waterways. Nature waited a while and then took their abandoned canals to grow rushes and water-lilies; and she covered the tow-paths with green and put tangles of undergrowth along; and then she gave it all to the birds and the frogs and the turtles.

So, it came to pass that river barriers counted once more — that the barrier across our river counted once more. We did not know whether the canal ahead of us was wholly abandoned; but we did know that it was so obstructed as to no longer furnish a way of getting a vessel above the falls.

The Powhatan was master again; and a little way beyond that next bend it would bar the progress of Gadabout just as, three centuries earlier, it had barred the progress

of the exploring boats that the first settlers sent up from James Towne.

Well, it was high time anyway for our journey to end. We had been several months upon the river — several months in travelling one hundred miles! One can not always go lazing on, even in a houseboat; even upon an ancient waterway leading through Colonial-land.

The old river may carry you to the beginning-place of your country; it may bear you on to the doors of famous colonial homes, full of old-time charm and traditional courtesy. But if so, then all the more need for falls and rapids to put a reasonable end to your houseboat voyage.

We came about the bend in the stream and, at sight of the city before us, were reminded of the keen prevision of its colonial founder. When Colonel William Byrd, that sagacious exquisite of Westover, came up the river one day in 1733 to this part of his almost boundless estate, and laid the foundations of Richmond here in the wilderness beside the Falls of the James, he foresaw that he was founding a great city. A "city in the air" he called it, and his dream came true. Its realization in steeples and spires and chimneys and roof-lines opened before us now

upon the slopes and the summits of the river hills.

Soon we were skirting the city's water front. We passed piers and factories and many boats. We went from the pure air of the open river into the tainted breath of the town. Among many odours there came to be chiefly one — that of tobacco from the great factories.

And that brought to mind a strange fact. In all our journey up the river, we had not seen a leaf of tobacco nor had we seen a place where it was grown. Tobacco, upon which civilization along the James had been built; that had once covered with its broad leaves almost every cultivated acre along the stream; that had made the greatness of every plantation home we had visited — and now unknown among the products of the fertile river banks!

At last Gadabout was at the foot of the falls and rapids. Like those first exploring colonists we found that here "the water falleth so rudely, and with such a violence, as not any boat can possibly passe."

Of course there was a temptation to do with our boat as the colonists once proposed to do with theirs — take her to pieces and then put her together again above the falls,

THE VOYAGE ENDED. GADABOUT IN WINTER QUARTERS.

and so sail on up the old waterway to the South Sea and to the Indies. But the exploring spirit of the race is not what it used to be, and we simply ran Gadabout into a slip beside the disused canal and stopped. An anchor went plump into the water, making a wave-circle that spread and spread till it filled the whole basin — a great round water-period to end our river story.

THE END.

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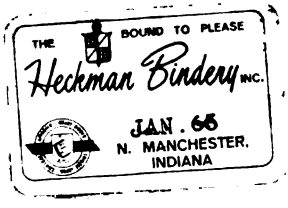
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